THE

COMMONWEALTH

OF

REASON.

BY

WILLIAM HODGSON,

NOW CONFINED IN THE PRISON OF NEWGATE, LONDON,

FOR SEDITION.

"THE PRIVILEGED ORDERS MAY PASS AWAY,
"BUT THE PEOPLE WILL BE ETERNAL."

Mirabeau.

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PREFACE.

AS the end of all government is, or ought to be, the ſecurity, happineſs, and advantage of the governed; and not the excluſive benefit and intereſt of thoſe intruſted with the legiſlative or executive power: who ſhould only be conſidered as the organs by which the majority of the community expreſs their will, and as the ſervants of the commonwealth, amenable at all times, for their conduct to the PEOPLE; theſe being the fountain, from whence *alone* can ſpring LEGITIMATE AUTHORITY; it may not be unacceptable, in theſe *ſpeculative times*, when the ſcience of political government appears to have awakened mens curioſity

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rioſity in an extraordinary degree; and the greater part of the world ſeem bent on the inveſtigation of its principles, and on the deſtruction of thoſe ABUSES, the exiſtence of which has but too long diſgraced civilized ſociety; to have ſome mode pointed out, by which, ſhould any of the preſent ſyſtems, ſo fraught with ruin and injurious to the true intereſts of mankind, be aboliſhed, we can reaſonably hope to obtain what ought to conſtitute the only object of every inſtitution, whether political or ſocial—PUBLIC HAPPINESS, from which ſource alone can flow individual felicity.

For this deſireable purpoſe, the following plan, for A COMMONWEALTH, TO BE FOUNDED ON THE BROAD AND DURABLE BASIS OF REASON, LIBERTY, FRATERNITY, AND EQUALITY, is ſubmitted to the candid conſideration and impartial examination of mankind. If, by the publication of it, the author ſhall be inſtrumental in removing any ſingle grievance, out of the enormous and almoſt countleſs number, under which men at preſent labour, no matter in what part of nature's wide extended empire; he will conſider his efforts as amply and honourably

nourably rewarded. If, on the contrary, it ſhall not be found to yield an idea, by which the preſent MISERABLE and UNHAPPY condition of man, can be ameliorated; he ſhall conſole himſelf with the pleaſurable reflection that muſt neceſſarily reſult from a conviction, that although his judgment may have erred, his intentions were honeſt, ſincere and well-meant; and he will retire, without experiencing any other painful ſenſation, than that of wanting the ability to do good, into that obſcurity, from which he never wiſhes to emanate, but for the purpoſe of increaſing the proſperity and happineſs of his fellow creatures, and which he conceives he can never do more effectually than by pointing out to them the TRUTH, and entreating them on every occaſion to conſult their REASON and their EXPERIENCE.

The author hopes he ſhall not be accuſed of egotiſm, if in this place he introduces the particulars of his own caſe, which he conſiders as affording a ſtriking inſtance of the Engliſh Adminiſtration of Juſtice——It is briefly this: On the 30th day of September, in the year 1793, being in company with my

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valued and much lamented friend, CHARLES PIGOTT, to whoſe literary exertions the cauſe of freedom moſt certainly is highly indebted; I dined with him and his brother at the King's Head Tavern, in the Poultry; from whence Charles Pigott and myſelf adjourned to the London Coffee-houſe, Ludgate Hill, to read the news papers; ſeating ourſelves in a box where no other perſon was, and reading in one of the papers an *official account of the retreat from before Dunkirk*, in which every friend of humanity muſt deplore the immenſe loſs of human blood, preceded by a paragraph that *the King had that morning taken the diverſion of ſtag hunting*; it induced an obſervation on the impropriety and inhumanity of ſuch ſports being purſued, while his ſubjects were deſtroyed by thouſands in battle. One remark neceſſarily produced another, during which I obſerved, that it would be an expenſive buſineſs for England (meaning the affair of Dunkirk) although beneficial to the Elector of Hanover, from the great number of Hanoverians deſtroyed on the occaſion; that this practice of hiring out troops was both ſcandalous and ſhameful,

ſhameful, and that the powers concerned were no better than German hog butchers; at the ſame time, jocoſely obſerving, that I had no doubt the King and the Prince of Heſſe-Caſſel were partners, and divided the money between them for the Heſſian troops that were killed and wounded. This converſation attracted the notice of ſome perſons who were in the Coffee-houſe: It being juſt about the time of the formation of REEVES's aſſociation *for the protection of property againſt Republicans and Levellers*. Speaking of which ſociety, Mr. ERSKINE, that great luminary of Engliſh juriſprudence, to whoſe exertions, aided by thoſe of his friend Mr. GIBBS, thouſands who are preſent alive, moſt aſſuredly are indebted for their now occupying a place in human ſociety, it being tolerably apparent to what lengths the proſecutions were meant to have been carried, had they not happily been arreſted by the powerful eloquence and energetic diſplay of legal knowledge uſed on that occaſion, by theſe champions of the injured Rights of Man, ſays, "*Liberty of thought and* "*ſpeech firſt produced the conſtitution which* "*England boaſts of;—that liberty of thought*

"*and*

" *and ſpeech is as neceſſary to preſerve, as*
" *it was to form that conſtitution. While*
" *ſuch an hoſt of men*" (alluding to theſe
aſſociations and their ſpies) " *are combined*
" *to overwhelm the unhappy man who may*
" *venture to utter a ſentiment, which a*
" *weak or biaſſed underſtanding may torture*
" *into a ſeditious meaning. Liberty of*
" *thought, liberty of ſpeech, liberty of pub-*
" *lication, which may be juſtly called the*
" *palladium of Britiſh liberty, cannot exiſt.*
" *Of courſe, ſuch an arbitrary juriſdic-*
" *tion goes immediately to the annihila-*
" *tion of that form of government, which*
" *they profeſs themſelves aſſociated to ſup-*
" *port, and ſhould be oppoſed by every well-*
" *wiſher to it.—That if the right of accuſa-*
" *tion was aſſumed by uninjured individu-*
" *als, or by voluntary, unauthoriſed, and*
" *undefined aſſociations of men, the prime*
" *bleſſing of ſocial union, fearleſs tranqui-*
" *lity of life could never be enjoyed;—the*
" *ſources of juſtice would be no longer pure,*
" *nor the adminiſtration of it impartial,*
" *while it might ſo happen that members of*
" *a grand or petit jury might be members of*
" *ſuch aſſociations; whereby men who had ſet*
" *them-*

" *themſelves up as licenſers of political ſenti-*
" *ments and publications; as tribunals that*
" *are to determine in the firſt inſtance what*
" *ſhall be deemed ſedition, actually become*
" *in ſuch caſes both accuſers and judges.*"

To reſume the narrative, the converſation having attracted notice, for at that period every coffee-houſe and other public place, was filled with ſpies and informers; Mr. WHITE NEWMAN, whoſe father, as he ſaid upon the trial, keeps an oil ſhop in Newgate-ſtreet, immediately roſe up in a great paſſion, called for a glaſs of punch, came running towards the box in which we were ſeated, and uſing many opprobrious expreſſions, inſiſted upon our drinking the King's Health.—Having never in my life been accuſtomed to act or ſpeak otherwiſe than as a free-man, I did not chooſe to have a toaſt thus impudently forced down my throat, and accordingly gave "THE FRENCH REPUBLIC, AND MAY SHE TRIUMPH OVER ALL HER ENEMIES." This aroufed the patriotiſm of Mr. LEACH, the maſter of the London Coffee-houſe, Ludgate-hill, who immediately ſent for conſtables, and we were taken to the NEW

COMPTER

COMPTER in Giltſpur-ſtreet, and placed in a wretched room without flooring or windows, denied the comfort of candle-light or bedding*. I ſhould add, that although we were inſulted, and even ſtruck by ſome of the company in the Coffee-houſe before the conſtable's face, yet he refuſed to take charge of the aſſailants. For this mighty offence we were taken the next morning before Mr. ALDERMAN ANDERSON, who ordered us to give bail for our appearance in ONE THOUSAND POUNDS: upon my reading a paſſage from MAGNA CHARTA and the BILL OF RIGHTS, he obſerved, that right or wrong, he ſhould commit us, and take the reſponſibility on himſelf. After a great deal of trouble, we were, at the end of three weeks, enlarged on bail to the amount required; when the grand jury threw out the bill againſt my friend Pigott, and found one againſt me; in conſequence of which, on the 2d of November

* The damp of this apartment, and the then inclemency of the weather, I verily believe laid the foundation of an illneſs in my late friend CHARLES PIGOTT, which ended with his death a few months afterwards, he died in the month of May 1794.

1793.

1793, I rendered myſelf in diſcharge of my bail, having been at large EIGHT DAYS, and on the 9th of December, 1793, I was brought to the bar of the Old Bailey, and tried before SIR JOHN WILLIAM ROSE, the Recorder of the city of London; Mr. FIELDING officiating for the Attorney General—when following the law of nature, which teaches every animal ſome mode of ſelf-defence, I was my own advocate—after a trial, in which the witneſſes for the crown frequently contradicted each other, and which laſted from ten in the morning until ſeven at night, the jury being near an hour in conſultation upon their verdict, I was found guilty of Sedition, and ſentenced to TWO YEARS IMPRISONMENT IN NEWGATE, TO PAY A FINE OF TWO HUNDRED POUNDS, AND GIVE SECURITY FOR TWO YEARS MORE IN FOUR HUNDRED POUNDS!!! I ſhall conclude with inſerting the following deſcription of the witneſſes againſt me, written by a friend of mine.

'The flaming zeal of this loyal chief 'juſtice of the kitchen' (Mr. Leach was formerly the cook to the London Coffee-houſe) 'had,

'had, upon the requiſition of his friend, Mr. 'Reeves, erected his coffee-houſe into a 'very extraordinary court of inquiſition, 'he the judge both of law and of fact, ſat 'ſtately in his bar; his former culinary fire 'roſe on his promotion from the kitchen to 'that dignity into a violent flame of attach-'ment to royalty and rage againſt Levellers. 'He, like a dutiful ſubject, wiſhed the Lords 'anointed to rule the roaſt, and perhaps 'ventured even to hope for a ſop in the pan 'as a reward for his loyalty.—He knew that 'Republicans were plain folks, and eat plain 'food; he trembled for his profeſſion—If 'they prevailed, "Othello's occupation "gone."—Mayor's feaſts, company's feaſts, 'pariſh feaſts, all preſented themſelves to his 'tortured imagination. Methinks I ſee him, 'his ſaucepan for an helmet, his pot-lid for 'a ſhield, his ſpit for a ſpear, and a huge 'carving knife for a ſword, ſallying forth the 'champion of royalty. But, as according 'to Mr. Burke, the age of chivalry is gone; 'let us once more view him in his judicial 'capacity, ſee him cautiouſly looking round 'his coffee-room, watching, leſt ſome diſ-'loyal wight ſhould utter profanations

'againſt

'againſt monarchy. Hard by ſits his friend 'WHITE NEWMAN, the pickle-merchant, 'with zeal hot as Cayenne pepper, and wrath 'ſharp as vinegar, againſt the leaſt particle 'of ſedition, carefully obſerving the words of 'all around. And laſt, though not leaſt in 'fame, ſat in conjunction vile, with BUCHANAN 'of Glaſgow, GRIFFITH VAUGHAN, late of 'Briſtol, linen-draper, though better known in 'that city by the name of *puffing* Vaughan; 'his loyalty, the ſhocking maſſacres at Briſtol '(where he was one of the commiſſioners of 'the tolls,) ſufficiently demonſtrate—and 'certainly ought to have entitled him to a 'ſhare in the Commercial Loan, ſo uſeful in 'patching up the decayed tools of the State '—although by the negligence of thoſe who 'ought to have rewarded this convenient 'ſon of the reſpectable order of *evangelical* '*embracers*, for his uncommom zeal, promp-'titude and affiduity—he is now languiſhing in 'Newgate!! Mr. Conſtable's loyalty ſeems 'to have been much on a par with that 'of his employers—he knew it was the '*King's Peace* that he was to keep.—It 'was the King's peace *only*, and certainly 'ought not to be extended to ſeditious men, 'who had dared, as *Judge* Leach ſaid, to

'ſpeak

'ſpeak diſreſpectfully of him.—No! let the 'vile Democrats be killed, he was not bound 'to protect them, much leſs to take into 'cuſtody thoſe whoſe *ſole crime* conſiſted in 'inſulting men who had wickedly dared to 'utter words to each other which his worthy 'maſters did not underſtand' (Vaughan ſaid, on his examination, that we frequently converſed in ſome foreign language, which he did not underſtand). 'Beſides, Democrats 'are known enemies to PERQUISITES and IDLE-'NESS, and ſhould they prevail, nothing but 'anarchy would take place in the pariſh; the 'churchwardens and overſeers would be 'forced to refund; POOR RATES would no 'longer be able to be converted into VENISON 'and MADEIRA; and, ſad tale to tell, GOLD 'would no longer atone for NOCTURNAL PEC-'CADILLOS, nor groupes of wretched proſtitutes 'be ſuffered nightly to repleniſh the punch-'bowls of the watch-houſe, while the houſe 'of the induſtrious inhabitant who pays for 'protection, is ſuffered careleſsly to be plun-'dered by the alert diſciples of Mercury.

'Oh! thrice happy Britain, when ſuch 'guardians protect thy liberties, and ſecure 'every avenue to the Throne againſt all in-'vaſion of the Swiniſh Multitude.'

THE COMMONWEALTH OF REASON.

PLAN, &c.

ARGUMENT.

EXPERIENCE having proved CORRUPTION to be the moſt dreadful evil that can poſſibly affect either public or private life, it is of courſe that which men ſhould be moſt ſtudious and zealous to avoid; any endeavour, therefore, to raiſe up barriers againſt this all-deſtructive vice, may be conſidered as one of the nobleſt efforts of the human underſtanding; as from thence has proceeded all thoſe arbitrary and diabolical actions we have at different periods witneſſed; and of which ſuch innumerable examples, that have juſtly called down the execration of mankind, are furniſhed in the hiſtory of the world.

As corruption is generally the reſult of power long continued in the ſame individual, and pre-

vention more humane and far better than detection, it is my intention, in this Plan, to make every ſituation in the Commonwealth, to which is attached either truſt or power, REVOLUTIONARY or ROTATIVE; thereby taking what I conceive to be the beſt remedy for, and precaution againſt, this moſt inveterate enemy to public happineſs; this epidemic, that has hitherto baffled the moſt ſtrenuous efforts of the moſt able phyſicians; this political Upas*, under whoſe baneful and malignant branches every virtue finds immediate death.

Philoſophers muſt have long ſince been convinced that the abuſe of power is much more the conſequence of long and uninterrupted poſſeſſion in the hands of individuals, than of any other cauſe whatever: and as it is an axiom in politics, *that wherever there is power there will be abuſe*, I imagine, that by making the power neceſſarily veſted in a part, to be exerciſed for the benefit of the whole, as fleeting, and of as little duration as poſſible, in the ſame individual, I obviate the great error in political inſtitutions, which ſeems to have been the delegation of thoſe powers, to be exerciſed without a juſt controul, and for a long

* The name of the Poiſon Tree, that grows in Japan.

and

and ſometimes an indefinite ſpace of time, that require the eyes of an Argus, and a frequent change of perſons, to prevent them from degenerating, by corruption, into tyranny and oppreſſion.

As pretended diſtinctions amongſt men, who are all equal by nature, and are all unqueſtionably equally helpleſs in infancy, and equally cold in the embraces of death, have a tendency to create a difference of intereſts in the ſame community, in which the weaker is invariably ſwallowed up, and deſtroyed, by the ſtronger; and human beings, otherwiſe naturally friends and brothers, are thereby ſet at enmity with each other, for the enjoyment of paltry titles, that do not *really* diſtinguiſh the poſſeſſors from the maſs of mankind, except in particular and local ſituations: I propoſe, that in my Plan, no grade, or title of diſtinction whatever, ſhall exiſt among the citizens of the Commonwealth, except what the exerciſe of ſuperior benevolence and virtue ſhall obtain from the general reſpect of ſociety, or what the temporary poſſeſſion of the public functions ſhall neceſſarily demand for the moment. Thus all being citizens, equal in rights, none will have an intereſt ſeparate from that of his neighbour, ſince no one will be capable of infringing or invading the right of another, without

out involving not only his own, but that of the whole Commonwealth of which he himſelf makes an integral part; of courſe, every ſuch attempt will, in this ſtate of perfect equality, be reſiſted not only by the citizen attacked, but by the collective force of the whole community, whoſe direct intereſt will effectually point out the abſolute neceſſity of the oppoſition: whilſt daily experience teaches us to know, that in thoſe ſtates where an inequality of rights does exiſt, it frequently becomes the intereſt and deſire of one grade or claſs to ſubvert and deſtroy the rights of another grade or claſs, thereby, as they falſely conceive, the more effectually to eſtabliſh and ſupport what the errors of their conſtitution have led them to conſider as their own. Thus, in ſuch ſtates, it very rarely or never happens that the collective body of the citizens find an occaſion, where their common intereſt is united. On this principle we may account for the fall of thoſe vaſt and mighty empires which Hiſtory informs us once had exiſtence, and of which we have not now left a ſingle veſtige, whereby to deſcry their ancient power and grandeur, except the traditionary detail, handed down to us by our anceſtors; for it is an old proverb in England, the truth of which has been univerſally admitted—"*That an Houſe divided againſt itſelf cannot ſtand.*"

As

As the accumulation of immenſe wealth in the hands of individuals, by any other means than perſonal induſtry, or equitable inheritance, may with great truth be conſidered as the primary and moſt effectual means by which the fiend, CORRUPTION, ſecretly undermines, and finally overturns the beſt and wiſeſt inſtitutions: the endeavour to deſtroy this channel of abuſe, *this panacea, that infallibly turns all virtue into vice*, without rendering injuſtice to any one, is ſurely highly deſerving the conſideration and attention of mankind; and as ſuch, will form a part of my Plan. Seeing, therefore, that ENTAILED ESTATES, the laws of PRIMOGENITURESHIP, and other unequal and unjuſt decrees, reſpecting the diſtribution of property, are the cauſes of theſe miſchievous maſſes of wealth, ſo highly dangerous to, and incompatible with, the exiſtence of LIBERTY, and which have been always found to furniſh the ready means of CORRUPTION, OPPRESSION and TYRANNY, I propoſe, that in no poſſible caſe ſhall the different children, whether male or female, of the ſame father, divide in other than equal portions, the property of which the ſire may die poſſeſſed. Thus we ſhall prevent that diſgraceful inequality of patrimony in children of the ſame parent, that at preſent furniſh not unfrequent inſtances, where the head of the family, as he is called, has a revenue of,

perhaps, *forty thouſand pounds a year*, whilſt the younger branches have ſcarcely a ſufficient income to ſupport the appearance that cuſtom has rendered abſolutely neceſſary to enable them to dine at their elder brother's table; to provide for whom, without injuring the poſſeſſions of the elder ſon, an almoſt incredible number of SINECURE places, and of trifling and uſeleſs offices, have been created under the different governments the world has hitherto witneſſed; the burthen of which has, without exception, ultimately fallen on thoſe, who, it muſt ever be acknowledged, form the great bulwark of every ſtate, the INDUSTRIOUS ARTISAN and LABORIOUS CULTIVATOR, as the payment of theſe places is uſually provided for, by taxes levied on articles of the moſt general conſumption, and of the firſt neceſſity: Independent of which, theſe rich men, to preſerve whole and inviolate whoſe property ſo much ſhameful injuſtice is done to the body of the citizens, become themſelves the *ſervile* TOOLS and *abject* SLAVES of the executive power; as upon no other condition can they reaſonably hope to make proviſion for their poorer relatives. Thus the only return the citizens receive for encouraging this immoral and partial diſtribution of the father's eſtate, is the deprivation of the independent aſſiſtance of thoſe whom, by the moſt flagrant injuſtice, they have loaded with riches.

riches. For theſe reaſons, I alſo propoſe, not to admit in the Commonwealth of any ſinecure place, than the exiſtence of which nothing can be more abſurd; for no one can, conſiſtently with honeſty, accept of payment for ſervices he has never performed, nor has the remoteſt intention of performing: indeed, ſinecure places may be literally denominated, A ROBBERY COMMITTED ON THE NATION, UNDER THE FALSE COLOUR AND SPECIOUS PRETEXT OF HAVING A PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT; and the exiſtence and duration of ſuch emoluments can only be built on the diſgraceful ignorance and culpable inattention of the greater part of the citizens compoſing the Commonwealth; ſince no man in his ſenſes would, knowingly, pay his baker for a loaf he never had or was to have. Neither do I propoſe to ſuffer the eſtabliſhment of any uſeleſs office or employment in the Commonwealth which can only be haraſſing to the citizens, and deſtructive of their common intereſt: Or to admit any enormous or diſproportionate ſalary to be annexed to the execution of the neceſſary public functions: for as no citizen ought to refuſe to take upon him, in his turn, that public employment, which a majority of his fellow-citizens ſhall call him to the exerciſe of; and as the due, faithful and impartial diſcharge of it is as much for his own ſecurity, happineſs and advantage, as

for that of the Commonwealth, ſo no citizen, who really wiſhes to promote the general proſperity of the Commonwealth, can or ought to have a deſire of wickedly enriching himſelf at the expence of the community; which he certainly does whenever he accepts, as a remuneration for his public ſervices, of a ſum greater than will defray the neceſſary expences and conſumption of time that has attended them, or of a ſinecure place, or of a penſion, or of a place of profit, the functions of which produce no general good to the citizens. The not ſuffering, therefore, any of theſe places or profits, *the exiſtence of which, in the governments we have hitherto witneſſed, may be juſtly ſtiled a radical error*, is the beſt and moſt certain way to prevent the dreadful neceſſity of reforming abuſes, that we ourſelves are the authors of, by permitting ſuch temptations to be thrown in the way of evil-diſpoſed, avaricious and deſigning men: for as it is an axiom in metaphyſics, *that no effect can poſſibly exiſt without a cauſe*, it is alſo an axiom in medicine, *that if you can remove the cauſe, the effect will ceaſe.*

As the exiſtence of EXCLUSIVE PRIVILEGES is the grand means by which theſe unhappy jealouſies, ſhameful diſſentions, and deſtructive animoſities, that have ever been found to be abſolutely neceſſary to the ſupport and exiſtence of ARBITRARY OPPRESSION, DESPOTIC POWER, and LAWLESS

LAWLESS CORRUPTION, are fomented and kept alive, and which effectually prevent that harmony that ought ever to subsist among the members of the Commowealth; it must appear evident to every thinking and reasonable being, that those customs, *such as a rich man being* ALONE *permitted to destroy a bird or animal, that has perhaps been nourished at the expence of his poorer neighbour*; *or A being suffered to arrest B, for a sum of money, that B may stand indebted to A, whilst B shall have no such remedy against A, when it happens that A stands indebted to B*; which have no other tendency than to destroy the happy union of interests, so requisite to the furtherance of the happiness and prosperity of the citizens, can only have originated with those monsters, for I will not disgrace the name of man, by giving them that appellation, who, lost to every social virtue, and wishing to trample with impunity on the SACRED and INDEFEASIBLE RIGHTS OF MAN, have cunningly introduced a system OF OPPRESSING ONE MAN FOR THE PROFIT OF ANOTHER; which, from the extreme ignorance of mankind, and their but too general inattention to their true and genuine interests, they have been able to pass on their blindness and credulity, as favours and advantages; and who, by these nefarious means, having acquired the direction of the public force, have, whenever the CHEAT has been discovered,

covered, *and men have attempted to regain their original ſtate of happy equality*, made uſe of that command, thus ſurreptitiouſly obtained, to perpetuate a ſyſtem, by which alone ſuch MISCREANTS and VIOLATERS OF JUSTICE, knew they could be enabled to commence with ſafety, and continue with impunity, their diabolical meaſures, enormous peculations, and ſanguinary adminiſtration. For theſe reaſons, I propoſe, that in my Plan no ſuch heterogenous and corrupt monſters of injuſtice, as PRIVILEGED ORDERS, GAME LAWS, MANORIAL RIGHTS, EXCLUSIVE CHARTERS, CORPORATIONS, and OTHER SUCH PARTIAL, WICKED, AND OPPRESSIVE PRIVILEGES ſhall have exiſtence: for nothing ſeems more irrational, than that the birds of the air, wild animals, or the fiſh of a river, which nature certainly has not ſtamped or marked with any particular man's name, and to which no one man can juſtly and honeſtly ſhew a ſuperior claim over his neighbour, ſhould be made the excluſive property of the rich man, and the poor man be puniſhed for the killing and appropriation of that which nature ſeems to have ſent for the expreſs purpoſe of appeaſing thoſe appetites ſhe has given him in common with the moſt wealthy and affluent. And it can never, ſurely, be argued, that the deſtroying of theſe creatures is in itſelf an immoral act; as, ſuppoſing ſuch argument

ment to be juſt, it could not but be admitted at the ſame time, that if it is immoral in the man of poverty, it is equally ſo in the man of riches: unleſs, indeed, men can be ſo weak and ſtupid, as to imagine that a rich man, lord of the manor, or other privileged perſon, has a licence and authority from Heaven, which purges the guilt from him, that attaches on the poor man's ſhoulders; and yet, ridiculous as this ſuppoſition muſt appear to every man of common ſenſe, we nevertheleſs hear of ſome men whoſe infallibility is accredited, and even held ſacred, with a great part of the world; which acknowledgment, on their parts, is abſolutely ſuppoſing the exiſtence of this monſtrous and incomprehenſible abſurdity. Neither can any thing be more ridiculous, cruel, and unjuſt, than that A ſhould have a remedy againſt his neighbour B, that B has not in like caſes againſt his brother citizen A, ſince what is puniſhable when done by B, can or ought to be no leſs ſo when committed by A, however ignorant men, by abſurd and nonſenſical privileges, accorded to A, may have ſheltered him from common juſtice, and enabled, and indeed encouraged him to commit, without fear of inquiry, or puniſhment, thoſe acts of diſhoneſty and oppreſſion to B, for which, but ſtrip him of his taliſmanic garments, he would be held in utter and general deteſtation.

As

As what are called, NATIONAL RELIGIOUS ESTABLISHMENTS, have been found to be the greateſt ſcourge that ever afflicted mankind; and have, at different periods, been perverted from what even the original inſtitutors themſelves meant ſhould be their object; and have been called into the aid of, incorporated with, and made part of almoſt every national government, by which means CORRUPTION has engendered, at the moderate expence of a few mitres and other ſuch baubles, an additional and moſt implacable enemy to the natural independance of man: and have by inſtilling the monſtrous and incongruous doctrine of eternal damnation to ſuch as differ in opinion from the national theology, robbed a great part of the citizens of their JUST, NECESSARY, and INDEFEASIBLE RIGHTS, under the ſpecious, and diabolical pretence of heterodoxy; and compelled the inhabitants of one country, to murder the citizens of another, for the propagation of what, EACH HAS CALLED THE TRUE RELIGION, to their mutual diſadvantage, and in direct defiance of the morality inculcated by all;—one of the great and principle tenets of theſe religion-mongers, being, according to their language, though not according to their practice, *to promote brotherhood and good-will amongſt men*; yet, how far this principle actuates thoſe who call themſelves orthodox,

thodox, *which each does in his turn*, may be beſt collected from the reciprocal benevolence they exerciſe towards each other; from a Jew being condemned to the Auto-de-Fe in Spain and Portugal, becauſe he will not believe that Jeſus Chriſt was the ſon of God; from a Chriſtian being held in general abhorence by the Turks, becauſe he doubts the truth of Mahomet's having aſcended ſeven Heavens, and held converſe with the Almighty; from a Roman Catholic being prevented in Proteſtant countries holding any public office or place of truſt and profit merely becauſe he believes the wine and the wafer he receives when taking the ſacrament, is the body and blood of his friend Jeſus Chriſt, whilſt the true believer, as he is ſtiled, under what the perſecuted catholic calls an heretical government, ſays, they are only taken in remembrance of their Lord and Maſter; betwixt whom and his preſent followers, there is no more reſemblance, "than I to Hercules;"—and a thouſand other wicked and diabolical pains and penalties attached to the great, enormous, and never to be forgiven crime of a man's thinking and judging for himſelf, in what is called the moſt material concern of his life, the ſalvation of his ſoul, not to mention the cruel and murderous wars that have been carried on by Jews againſt Gentiles; Chriſtians againſt Turks; Turks againſt Infidels;

dels; and one ſect of Chriſtians againſt another ſect of Chriſtians; in which barbarous, bloody, and blaſphemous conteſts, millions of infatuated men have loſt their lives, without the point in diſpute being yet determined; the combatants having been always reduced to the ſituation of the hare and the hound:—WHERE ONE WAS TOO FATIGUED TO FOLLOW, AND THE OTHER TOO TIRED TO RUN AWAY; therefore, as every eſtabliſhment in a Commonwealth ſhould be really and truly to promote FRATERNITY among the citizens, and to draw cloſely the bonds of union in ſociety; it follows of courſe, that theſe inſtitutions, experience having proved them to be productive of contrary effects, ſhould by every well wiſher and friend to the repoſe and happineſs of mankind be avoided. And as religion ſeems to be a ſubject on which men may perhaps never be perfectly agreed; ſince no one can, by any thing like demonſtrative evidence, prove that the tenets of the particular ſect to which he belongs, is more acceptable to the Supreme Being, than thoſe of another ſect, whether he be BAPTIST, JEW, GENTILE, MAHOMETAN, ARMENIAN, CHRISTIAN, ANTICHRISTIAN, ADAMITE, DUNKER, SWEDENBURGIAN, WORSHIPER OF THE SUN, WORSHIPER OF THE MOON, UNIVERSALIST, EUTYCHIAN, ADRAMMELECHIAN, PHILADELPHIAN, QUARTODECIMANIAN, PREDESTINARIAN,

DESTINARIAN, AGONYCLITE, BONASIAN, BASILIDIAN, HOTTENTOT, NESTORIAN, CARPOCRATIAN, ANTINOMIAN, MARONIST, CARTESIAN, SCOTIST, THOMIST, SCRIPTURIST, SACRAMENTARIAN, WORSHIPPER OF FO, GNOSTIC, IDOLATOR, QUIETIST, SABATTARIAN, MANICHEAN, ROMAN CATHOLIC, TRINITARIAN, ANTITRINITARIAN, RHETORIAN, MENGRELIAN, ANNOMÆAN, BROWNIST, WHITFIELLITE, CATAPHRYGIAN, MESSALIAN, PELAGIAN, SEMIPELAGIAN, ELCESACITIAN, ANTHROPOMORPHITE, MILLENARIAN, ANTIDICOMARIONITE, CERDONIST, ELATERIST, STERCORANIST, JACOBITE, GEORGIAN, ANTITACTITE, CONGREGATIONALIST, COLLUTHEAN, BERULIAN, EUDOXIAN, SOLIFIDIAN, PRISCILLIANIST, MELCHITE, HERODIAN, CERINTHIAN, APPOLLINARIAN, AGYNITE, PAPIST, QUINTILLIAN, SCEPTIC, CIRCUMCELLIAN, DISCIPLINARIAN, EUNOMIAN, ALBANGIST, METEMSYCHITE, LOLLARD, HEMEROBAPTIST, FRATRICELLIAN, ARCHONTICK, ETERNALIST, DISSENTER, SAMARITAN, REMONSTRANT, OPINIONIST, PATRIPASSIANIST, ARTOLYRIST, AQUARIAN, UBIQUITARIAN, PHOTINIAN, MARIANALATRIST, SUBLAPSARIAN, SUPRALAPSARIAN, METAMORPHIST, EBIONITE, JANSENIST, ROGATIST, MENNONITE, SABEAN, APELLITIAN, MARCIONIST, DULCINIST, CATHARIAN,

THARIAN, ASCORDRIGILIAN, MACEDONIAN, AUGUSTINIAN, MONTANIST, CHILIAST, MUNCERIAN, LIBERTINE, BONGOMILIAN, REBAPTIZER, BARDESANIST, SEVERIAN, GENTOO, BARULITE, APOSTOLIAN, BACCHANALIAN, ARIAN, SABELLIAN, QUAKER, BAGNOLENSIAN, PHARISEE, VAUDOIS, ERASTIAN, PETROBRUSIAN, TIMOTHEAN, LUCIFERIAN, BAANITE, EUSTATHIAN, FLAGELLANT, MONOTHEIST, SOCINIAN, TRITHEITE, STOICK, GORTINIAN, SOFEE, BRAMAN, SETHIAN, FASTER, PROTESTANT, SANDIMONIAN, LUTHERAN, CALVINIST, FIFTHMONARCHIST, SELEUCIAN, NEW JERUSALEMITE, POLYGAMIST, FATALIST, POLYTHEIST, NAZARITE, GAULONITE, FLORINUSITE, SABATHIAN, VALENTINIAN, JOVINIANIST, SADDUSEE, PYRRHONIST, PYTHAGOREAN, PRESBYTERIAN, METHODIST, OPTIMIST, DONATIST, MORAVIAN, MUGGLETONIAN, DEIST, NOVATIAN, TAO-SSE, UNITARIAN; it follows of courſe, that ſetting up one ſpecies of religion, in preference to others, or nationalizing it, by countenancing, protecting, and ſupporting in idleneſs and luxury ſuch drones as MUFTIS, POPES, TA-HO-CHANGS, GREAT LAMAS, PARSONS, ARCHBISHOPS, DEACONESSES, RECTORS, HIGH-PRIESTS, ELDERS, FAKIRS, BISHOPS, DEACONS, MUSTAPHIS, ARCHDEACONS, DRUIDS, PRIESTESES, LEVITES, PRIORS, CANNONS, DEANS, PRIESTS, DOCTORS

OF

OF DIVINITY, HO-CHANGS, NUNS, RABBIS, MONKS, ABBES, CARMELITES, JESUITS, CARTHUSIANS, DOMINICANS, FRANCISCANS, LADY ABBESSES, MASORITES, LAMAS, CARDINALS, EMIRS, VICARS, PROPHETS, PREBENDS, TALAPOINS, BONZES, BRAMINS, APOSTLES, SEERS, PRIMONTRES, BENEDICTINES, JACOBINES, FEUILLANS, BERNARDINES, FRERES DE L'ORDRE DE LA MERCY, CORDELIERS, CAPUCHINS, RECOLLECTS, FRERES DE LA CHARITE, MINIMES, ORATORIANS, CHARTREUX, PREDICATEURS, PICPUCES, CARMES, AUGUSTINS, URSULINES, CALVERIANS, CLERINES, SOEURS DE LA CROIX, BARNABITES, SOEURS DE LA CHARITE, ANNONCIATS, SOEURS DE ST. THOMAS, CARMES DE CHAUSSEE, PETIT PERES, DAMES DE ST. CLAIRE, LAZARISTS, ORDRE DE ST. BENOIT, DAMES DE LA VISITATION, CELESTINES, CHAPITRE NOBLE DES FEMMES, CHANOINS, TRAPISTES, INCAS, FRIARS, CURATES, CLERGYMEN, CHAPLAINS, and other ſuch uſeleſs beings, or *as they emphatically ſtyle each other* IMPUDENT IMPOSTORS, who being too proud and lazy to work, have availed themſelves of man's credulity, and the corruption of the executive power, to get laws enacted, enabling them to ſteal with impunity from the laborious and induſtrious citizens; and who not content with thus cheating mankind, have contrived to defraud each other in the diviſion of the ſpoil, by giving to one, be-

cauſe he wears a cap of a particular form, and of his own invention, TEN OR TWELVE THOUSAND POUNDS A YEAR, whilſt the poor devils who read all their tenets to the infatuated multitude are allowed by theſe *meek*, *moderate*, *temperate*, *ſober*, *honeſt*, *chaſte*, *virtuous*, *modeſt*, *dignified*, and *ſuperior* interpreters of what, *as they ſay of each other*, each impiouſly chooſes to call God's holy word, perhaps FIFTEEN OR TWENTY POUNDS A YEAR; but then their motto is *patience, and perhaps I may be a cardinal, biſhop, pope, muſti, Taho-chang Great Lama, or high-prieſt*; it follows, I ſay, that theſe eſtabliſhments, which produce ſuch caterpillars, who pretend that an all juſt God has ſent them to devour the good things of this world, without contributing to the labour of producing them, can be attended with no other conſequence than that unhappy one of exciting the moſt rancorous animoſities and implacable reſentments betwixt thoſe whoſe immediate intereſt conſiſts in preſerving the utmoſt cordiality, harmony, and fraternity, with each other, becauſe they are at every inſtant endeavouring to gain ſuperiority the one over the other, by engendering the moſt vicious hatred in their followers againſt all who happen to diſſent from their particular doctrine; I therefore propoſe, as religion is a ſubject merely of opinion, and conſequently ought to be free as the circumambient air, not to ſuffer the building, at

other

other than private expence, any CATHEDRAL, MOSQUE, SYNAGOGUE, CONVENT, PAGOD, CHURCH, MONASTERY, TABERNACLE, CONVENTICLE, ABBEY, MEETING-HOUSE, NUNNERY, PANTHEON, CHAPEL, TEMPLE, ALTAR, or other edifice, to be appropriated to the purpoſe of what is called NATIONAL RELIGIOUS WORSHIP; or the endowment of any MONASTRY or NUNNERY; or the exiſtence of any tythes, or other proviſion for what are called the REGULAR and NATIONAL CLERGY; taking it for granted, that the citizens can never be more happy, or the Commonwealth more flouriſhing, than when they follow that precept in ethics, of DO UNTO ALL MEN AS YOU WOULD THEY SHOULD DO UNTO YOU; which great and immutable principle of morality is invaded whenever one man attempts to deprive another of any of his rights, merely becauſe he happens to differ from him in religious opinions; for who will ſay, that the Swede, when he caſtrates the deluded Roman Catholic prieſt, who has the misfortune to be found in his country, would not think himſelf ill uſed by being ſerved in the ſame manner, whenever he chanced to go to Rome; and nevertheleſs this is one of thoſe ſavage cuſtoms, amongſt a prodigious number of others, equally barbarous, that have been introduced by theſe religioniſts, who, with unbluſhing effrontery and unparalleled impudence, tell you, that in ſo doing they zealouſly ſerve the Supreme Being,

promote the happineſs of man, and propagate the doctrines of that great and good man Jeſus Chriſt, of whom it is recorded, in the New Teſtament, a book which theſe hypocrites themſelves pretend to believe the truth of, that he was of ſo meek a diſpoſition, that, in his advice to his diſciples and followers, he ſaid, "*If any man ſmite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the left alſo.*"

And as the eſtabliſhment of laws, however good and wholeſome they may be, can be of no real uſe or ſervice to the citizens, whilſt the moſt effectual care is not taken to obtain a fair, impartial, and ſpeedy execution of them; and as all experience muſt have long ſince convinced men that ſuffering of the law to be practiſed by individuals, for their own peculiar benefit and advantage, thereby making a trade of that which ſhould form a principal and prominent feature in the executive power of the Commonwealth, is a principle that is radically founded in error, militates directly againſt a due and equitable adminiſtration of juſtice, is attended with the moſt injurious conſequences to ſociety; with the moſt melancholy examples of ruin and poverty to the parties ſeeking redreſs, and above all, has become in the hands of CORRUPTION a very principal means of enſlaving nations, of deſtroying the great and ſacred rights of man, and of rending aſunder

aſunder thoſe fraternal bonds, which ſhould ever unite the citizens in the moſt brotherly affection to each other; and the laws having, in moſt countries, under the ſlimſy pretext and ſpecious aſſertion of maintaining peace, order, and good government, of every one of which they are at preſent entirely ſubverſive, no doubt, expreſsly with a view to the particular intereſts of thoſe legal wolves, who are continually prowling in ſociety, ſeeking whom they may devour, become ſo complicated and entangled, that a whole life ſpent in the moſt unremitting ſtudy of them, is not ſufficient to aſcertain, with preciſion, what is or is not law, whereby the great bulk of the citizens of moſt countries are left in ignorance, and the moſt ſhameful ſtate of blindneſs, of what ought to conſtitute their principal inſtruction, namely, a clear and accurate knowledge of thoſe laws under which they live, are governed, and by which their lives, fortunes, and honour, are liable every day to be judged; and as the preſent method of adminiſtering public juſtice in moſt countries is ſuch, that the greater part of the citizens are imbued with a belief that they have no occaſion to obtain a knowledge of the laws of their nation, ſince they can always be able to find men who have ſtudied them in a manner that is termed *profeſſional*, and theſe to keep up the deluſion and error, purpoſely contrive to render them ſo intricate and perplexing,

that the generality of men are deterred from entering upon an examination of their principles, and, by this trick, the public juſtice of a country is held up to ſale like goods at an auction, where the beſt bidder generally is the purchaſer, with this difference, that whereas in the auction, the buyer may perhaps be benefited by his bargain, the gainer of a law ſuit is but too generally ruined, and in a worſe condition than if he had quietly put up with the firſt injury,—indeed, the lawyers are, in fact, in almoſt all countries the moſt zealous, and ſtrongeſt inculcators of Chriſtianity; for experience ſoon teaches all their clients, to their coſt, that it is much more for their advantage to follow that precept of Jeſus Chriſt, where he ſays, "*And him that taketh away thy cloak forbid him not* "*to take thy coat alſo, and of him that taketh away* "*thy goods, aſk them not again*," than employ an attorney to recover them, for frequently in attempting to recover his hat, the citizen has the misfortune to loſe his coat, waiſtcoat, ſhirt, ſtockings, and breeches; it ſhould ſeem, therefore, that thoſe ſocieties, who are eſtabliſhed for the purpoſe of propagating the Chriſtian Faith, would do well to recommend to the Pope the ſupplying all vacant church eſtabliſhments with theſe ſtrenuous ſupporters of the Doctrines of Jeſus Chriſt, inſtead of thoſe clergymen, who, by their conduct, ſeem determined rather to bring Chriſtianity into diſeſteem than promote its intereſts; and as diſtributive juſtice demands that

every

every where the laws ought really to be what the Engliſh judges ſay the law of their country is, equally open to the poor and the rich; although how far this is the caſe in moſt countries may be beſt judged of by the daily occurrences, where, if a man have not wherewith to fee an avaricious attorney, his complaints, however juſt, againſt his neighbour muſt remain unheard and unredreſſed, whilſt there are not wanting abundance of inſtances, where the man of wealth, by the mere dint of money, *properly applied, as the men of law profeſſionally term it*, has been able to harraſs, oppreſs, and ruin his fellow-citizen, without any juſt cauſe whatever; and to what is all this to be attributed but that which is conſidered by the profeſſion as their ſheet anchor, and emphatically termed the GLORIOUS UNCERTAINTY OF THE LAW, which rendered into plain Engliſh, is, *whoſe attorney is the greateſt rogue, who has the longeſt purſe, and the moſt convenient witneſſes*; and as this glorious uncertainty of the law, ſo much valued and boaſted of by its profeſſors, is, or ought to be, its greateſt reproach, becauſe the law ſhould equally apply to all the citizens, and none be ſuffered to be ignorant of it; ſhould be definite, and never be ſo made as to admit of two or more conſtructions; and as delay in the determination of cauſes, is of all things the moſt deſtructive of juſtice, by opening a wide and ex-

tenſive field for CORRUPTION, PERJURY, and OPPRESSION, and is highly harraſſing, and cruel to the parties accuſed; there being a variety of examples where citizens who were extremely innocent of the crime alledged, have been detained in priſon for SIX, NINE, TWELVE MONTHS, and more, without being ever brought to trial, and at laſt diſcharged without any thing like evidence being offered of their guilt; therefore, to remedy theſe evils, I propoſe, in my plan, not to ſuffer any attorney or advocate to be paid at the private expence of the individual ſeeking juſtice, but propoſe, that the law, the juſt and equitable adminiſtration of which is a circumſtance mutually intereſting to the whole body of the citizens, ſhould really be what the adminiſtrators of Engliſh juriſprudence ſay of their laws equally attainable by the affluent and the needy, and for this purpoſe, I propoſe, that it ſhould at all times be adminiſtered at public expence, and without any unneceſſary delay; thus preventing any uſeleſs and inconvenient diſburſement of money on the part of either plaintiff or defendant, and giving every citizen his remedy againſt oppreſſion; thus reſtoring JUSTICE to her original purity, by taking out of her beam that bias which at preſent but too often cauſes one of her ſcales to preponderate, and never permitting her ſword to ſtrike but when truth directs the blow.

PLAN,

PLAN, &c.

I SHALL now proceed to lay down the outlines of my plan for a COMMONWEALTH, and here I muſt entreat the candid reader to bear in mind, that if any part or the whole of it, may appear incongruous, I ſhall feel the greateſt pleaſure in ſeeing my feeble attempts taken up by a more maſterly hand, and that happineſs, which is the undoubted right of and which I moſt fervently wiſh my fellow creatures to poſſeſs, placed by ſuperior abilities, within the reach of oppreſſed mortals, by the propoſition for a rational Government, to be founded on the indefeaſible rights of man; the non-exiſtence of which in moſt countries has hitherto ſo cruelly ſcourged the human ſpecies, ſinking them in ſlavery, ſloth and baſeneſs; making them hug thoſe chains they ought to rend aſunder; corrupting their morals, degenerating their habits, and ſubmitting them to the cruel

cruel and rapacious tyranny of a few crafty knaves and designing villains, that puniſh the imbecility of thoſe, who, imitate their example with the moſt bloody and dreadful tortures; thus filling their priſons with the wretched victims of their ſavage policy, or elſe ſtrewing the earth with the dead and mangled carcaſes of thoſe who left deſtitute by the negligence of ſociety have been forced into criminal purſuits to obtain that proviſion which their phyſical wants have rendered abſolutely neceſſary; but which the injuſtice and rapacity of theſe unfeeling gaolers of the human mind, has prevented them from being capacitated to obtain by other means, than depredating in their turn upon thoſe who never ceaſe, for an inſtant, to pillage and ravage their fellow-citizens to ſupport themſelves in the moſt ſhameful debauchery, and extravagant diſſipation:—Regardleſs of the miſery and wretchedneſs which they everywhere diffuſe, by the gratification of thoſe inordinate and deſolating paſſions, that reduce them in the eyes of the honeſt and virtuous man, far below the level of the beaſts of the field. Indeed, government, in the moſt part of the preſent ſocieties, may be compared to caterpillars and locuſts, who deſtroy, without remorſe, the produce of the induſtry and labour of others, without ever dreaming of giving in any manner, their aſſiſtance in return.

I am

I can truly ſay, that the endeavour to point out the means of eſtabliſhing ſuch a government has been the moſt prominent motive for the preſent publication; conſcious of the deficiency of my own acquirements, in the proſecution of this deſign, I can flatter myſelf with nothing more than the hope, that I may by it excite in the boſom of the PHILOSOPHER, and man of reflection, the deſire of ameliorating the miſeries of his ſpecies; which, whatever may be the difference of opinion between men, on the beſt means of remedying them, muſt at all events be univerſally acknowledged but too fatally to have exiſtence, and to cry aloud for redreſs: no man of humanity can look at the cottager, and ſee him meagre, half famiſhed, and worn down with exceſſive toil; his children naked and uneducated, and at the ſame time, view the plumpneſs and healthy appearance of the coach-horſe, that drags his Lord in enervating idleneſs paſt the humble thatch, and not be ready to allow, that wherever ſuch a wicked diſparity between the condition of the human and brutal ſpecies exiſts, the government muſt be radically wrong, infamous, and little calculated to produce the deſirable end for which government was originally inſtituted.

To the critics, I can only ſay, I ſhall chearfully ſubmit to their laſhes, while they inflict them only

only in conformity to juſtice and reaſon; and that far from feeling myſelf angered by their animadverſions, however ſevere they may be, I ſhall be happy in having my miſtakes rectified, and to be drawn from my wanderings into the path of TRUTH; to be imbued, with whoſe ſublime doctrines forms the moſt zealous wiſh of my heart, and to inculcate the facinating, beautiful and delicious tenets of this long neglected, though radiant ſun of human felicity, bounds the utmoſt ambition of my ſoul; and ſhould I ever again appear before the public tribunal, I ſhall feel it the moſt honourable part of my life, candidly to acknowledge my errors, and thankfully to recognize the benefits that I may have received from the impartial obſervations of the LEARNED, and the honeſt criticiſms of the friends of HUMANITY and TRUTH.

This premiſed, I think it proper and ſuitable to my ſubject, to ſet out with a declaration of rights, founded on the broad and permanent baſis of LIBERTY, FRATERNITY and EQUALITY, as I conceive it is on the imperiſhable foundation of theſe rights alone, that thoſe laws and regulations can be built, which ſhall truly and faithfully have for object, what ought to be conſidered the moſt important of all human purſuits—THE HAPPINESS OF THE HUMAN RACE LIVING TOGETHER IN SOCIETY.

DECLARA-

DECLARATION OF RIGHTS.

ARTICLE FIRST.

ALL men, when they come out of the hands of nature, are equal and free. This freedom and equality they can never infringe without committing injuſtice to themſelves; they ought always to remain equal and free: no diſtinction ought to exiſt amongſt the citizens but what is conducive to the general utility and happineſs of ſociety; any privilege, therefore, granted to a member of ſociety for his own particular advantage becomes an injuſtice to the reſt of the citizens.

ARTICLE SECOND.

The legitimate end of all aſſociation whatever, is the conſervation of ſociety, and the preſervation of the natural and impreſcriptible rights of each of its members: theſe rights are Liberty, Security, and Reſiſtence againſt oppreſſion

ſion of every kind, and are founded on the nature of man.

ARTICLE THIRD.

The SOVEREIGNTY ought to reſide in the majority of the citizens who compoſe a nation. No *body of men* of leſs amount than the abſolute majority; no *individual*, unleſs authoriſed by a complete majority, can legitimately exerciſe any authority over the citizens, becauſe nature has willed that its part ſhall always remain ſubordinate to the whole.

ARTICLE FOURTH.

LIBERTY conſiſts in the power of doing every thing for the advantage of the individual which does not trench upon the rights of another: thus no reſtriction ought to be laid on the rights of any man, becauſe, whenever the exerciſe of a function becomes injurious to ſociety, it ceaſes to be Liberty, and becomes LICENTIOUSNESS; but as every man may not be able to form to himſelf an accurate and preciſe idea of what conſtitutes Licentiouſneſs, the law, which, to be juſt, muſt be the expreſſion of the will of the abſolute majority of the citizens, fixes boundaries to the actions of men. The true and ſole limitation of Liberty is, the not doing that to another which you would not wiſh he ſhould do unto you.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE FIFTH.

The law can acquire no right to forbid thoſe actions which are not injurious to ſociety. Every thing that is not forbidden by the law, each citizen ought to be allowed to do with ſafety, and ought to be by the law guaranteed in doing; but no citizen ought to be obliged to do that which is not preſcribed by the law made antecedent to the compulſion.

ARTICLE THE SIXTH.

The law ought to be the expreſſion of the will of the majority of the citizens compriſing a ſtate; a majority of the citizens, by themſelves or their repreſentatives, ought to conſent to the law before it can have effect: it ought to be the ſame for every citizen, otherwiſe it would degenerate into injuſtice.

ARTICLE THE SEVENTH.

Every citizen being equal in rights, ought to be equally admiſſible to the occupation of that poſt which a majority of his fellow citizens ſhall call upon him to hold; each citizen ought to be compelled to accept the public offices in his turn, if a majority of his fellow-citizens think fit; but no citizen ought to be obligated to hold a pub-

a public ſituation twice until every other citizen ſhall have filled the ſame poſt.

ARTICLE THE EIGHTH.

Religion being a matter of opinion, ought to be free as the circumambient air. No citizen ought to be compelled to adopt any particular religious tenets, or be excluded from his rights as a citizen on account of his faith, while the manifeſtation of it does not tend to injure the ſociety of which he forms a part.

ARTICLE THE NINTH.

No citizen ought to be accuſed, arreſted, or detained, except in caſes determined by the law, and according to the forms which ſhall be preſcribed by the law. As puniſhment ought to attach to illegal arreſt or detention of any citizen, ſo no citizen ought to withhold an obedience to the law, and reſiſtance to it becomes a crime.

ARTICLE THE TENTH.

The law ought not to eſtabliſh any puniſhment that is diſproportioned to the crime committed; and puniſhment to be legitimate, ought to have been decreed and promulgated antecedent to the offence, and be applied according to the forms preſcribed.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE THE ELEVENTH.

Every citizen being preſumed innocent until ſuch time as a jury of his fellow-citizens ſhall have declared him guilty; whenever it ſhall be deemed neceſſary to the public ſafety to ſeclude a citizen, all co-ercive force, not abſolutely neceſſary to the detention of his perſon, ought to be criminal.

ARTICLE THE TWELFTH.

The free communication of thought and of opinion is one of the moſt irrefragable and precious rights of a citizen. Every citizen therefore ought to be allowed freely to ſpeak, write, and publiſh his ſentiments, and opinion, upon any and every ſubject, when ſuch writing, ſpeaking, or publiſhing is not injurious to the intereſts of individuals: the law ought, therefore, to apply remedies to the abuſes of the preſs and of ſpeech, only in the caſes of individuals.

ARTICLE THE THIRTEENTH.

The keeping of any armed force on foot, other than the citizens of the ſtate, being inconſiſtent with the liberties of the citizens, ought to become criminal in the parties concerned: the armed force being for the benefit of all ought not to

be applied to the ſole uſe or advantage of any individual, except in protecting his natural rights.

ARTICLE THE FOURTEENTH.

Society has a right to reimburſe thoſe expences which it incurs, by a levy on each of its citizens; this impoſt ought to be equally ſuſtained by all the citizens, according to the abilities of each.

ARTICLE THE FIFTEENTH.

Every public functionary ought to be reſponſible to the ſociety for his adminiſtration; from this reſponſibility he ought not to be abſolved.

ARTICLE THE SIXTEENTH.

Every citizen has the impreſcriptible right by himſelf, or by his repreſentative, to give his voice concerning the neceſſity of the contribution to be levied; it ought not to be levied without the conſent of a majority of the citizens previouſly obtained; every individual has a right to inveſtigate the public accounts, and any attempt to prevent the exerciſe of this right, is an infraction of the rights of man, and ought to attach criminality.

ARTICLE

ARTICLE THE SEVENTEENTH.

Society ought to guarantee to every citizen the exercise of his natural and unalienable rights; whenever these are attacked, each citizen has an indefeasible right to call upon society for protection against the invader—Society ceases to be just when it refuses this assistance.

ARTICLE THE EIGHTEENTH.

Every citizen has a right to the protection of society in the enjoyment of his property honestly acquired; no power can deprive him of any part of it, except when a majority of his fellow-citizens shall have declared it necessary to the safety of the state, and in that case, society is bound to make him an indemnity.

REPRESENTATION AND EXECUTIVE GOVERNMENT.

Men, in forming themselves into societies, have tacitly made a COVENANT, by which they engage to be mutually serviceable to each other, and to do nothing that can be injurious either to their individual or collective capacity; yet the

nature of man rendering it indiſpenſibly neceſſary that he ſhould at every inſtant ſearch after happineſs, which he always makes conſiſt in the gratification of ſome paſſion, it becomes neceſſary to direct theſe paſſions in ſuch a manner that they may concur to the general proſperity, by which alone individual happineſs can be truly ſaid to exiſt; for this purpoſe LAWS are eſtabliſhed, by which it is or ought to be aſcertained, from the united wiſdom of ſociety, what actions are or are not conducive to the maintenance of aſſociation, and the felicity of its members. But that theſe laws may be equitable and receive a general obedience, it is alſo neceſſary, that they ſhould, at all times, be the expreſſion of the public will, indeed, whenever they are not the reſult of the FREE CONSENT of a majority of the citizens who compoſe a ſtate, they are an infraction of the rights of man, an unjuſt USURPATION, and a direct ROBBERY. And, as in numerous aſſociations, an aſſembly of the whole citizens to diſcuſs public meaſures is altogether impracticable, and could not be held without engendering tumults and diſorder; it has been found neceſſary to chooſe from amongſt the citizens, individuals in whom ſociety places a confidence, to be the organs by which the general will, that is to ſay, the will of the majority of the citizens is expreſſed; theſe are intruſted with a certain degree of power, to

make

make ſuch regulations and laws, as they may judge expedient and neceſſary to the happineſs and well-being of the community, of which they themſelves form a part.

CORRUPTION, that dreadful weapon in the hands of wicked and deſigning men, found means to ſpread its baneful influence into this wholeſome and ſalutary inſtitution, and by degrees to enlarge the powers of the deputy by reſtricting thoſe of the elector; till at length the moſt profligate of the repreſentatives, in many inſtances, ſeparated themſelves from their companions; aſſumed the ſovereign authority, and having ſurreptitiouſly obtained the command of the public force, they turned that which was originally meant for the protection of ſociety, againſt ſociety itſelf; and through the ignorance and ſtupidity of man, thus made the abject ſlave of thoſe who firſt received their appointments from him, the ſervant became the maſter: uſe familiariſed them to the aſſumption; ignorance and credulity concurred to rivet their ſhackles; until, at laſt, man entirely loſt ſight of the firſt intention of his aſſociation, and in his delirium and blindneſs, he committed for theſe very men, who had uſurped over him an abſolute authority, the moſt cruel and oppreſſive acts againſt his fellow-citizens; the intereſts of ſociety were divided, and man became an eaſy prey to the ambitious and deſigning knave.

Elevated ſouls at different periods, feeling the natural dignity of man debaſed, his rights torn from him, and commiſerating the wretchedneſs which every where pervades human aſſociation, have endeavoured to draw ſociety out of this ſtate of degradation, and place its members once more in the poſſeſſion of their legiſlative rights; but an unfortunate principle that has hitherto infuſed itſelf into almoſt all their ſchemes, I mean that of dividing the repreſentative and executive power, and making certain ſituations hereditary, has rendered, for the greater part, their moſt ſtrenuous efforts nugatory and abortive.

And as the ſending men to legiſlate without giving them the neceſſary power to carry their laws into execution would be an abſurdity; ſo the ſeparation of the executive and repreſentative body, ſeems to have had its origin in an intention to deceive and defraud the people of their juſt rights; under a pretext as flimſy as it is fallacious; and not from any evident demonſtration of its being productive of ſuperior benefits to ſociety: therefore, I propoſe that the repreſentative and executive government ſhall be the ſame. The great deſideratum then ſeems to be, to obtain a perfect and practicable equality of repreſentation; and to give to every citizen a due participation in the choice of thoſe perſons, to whom is delegated the power of diſpoſing of a part of that property, which can only legitimately be the off-

ſpring

ſpring of induſtry, and of making thoſe laws which may abridge a part of man's original liberty, in order to ſecure the ſafety and felicity of every component member of the Commonwealth; and here I muſt diſſent from that diſtinction, which has hitherto been held as an axiom not to be departed from, that of cauſing property, and not perſons, to be repreſented; and my reaſon for thus diſſenting is this, that in all caſes it is perſons, and not property, that muſt protect both the laws and ſociety; for all the gold, ſilver, and other valuables that ever came out of the bowels of the earth, could never have been able, without the aſſiſtance of men's bodies, to have protected a ſingle individual againſt the depredations of rapacious villains and titled robbers. Property, therefore, in my opinion, ſhould never be conſidered in any other light than as an adventitious circumſtance, enabling the citizen who poſſeſſes it to gratify more ſenſual appetites, than the citizen who has no ſuch appendage; but as by no means giving the poſſeſſor any advantage in point of right or privilege over his poorer fellow-citizen: whoſe body, without this caſualty will form as ſtrong a rampart againſt the enemies of ſociety, as that of the richeſt NABOB that ever left the inſulted and enſlaved ſhores of HINDOSTAN, glutted with BLOOD, DIAMONDS, and WRETCHEDNESS!!!

I therefore propoſe that the COMMONWEALTH, ſhall be divided into diſtricts, containing, as nearly as poſſible, each TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND inhabitants intitled to vote; that is to ſay, male citizens, who ſhall have attained the age of eighteen years, and who ſhall not be incapacitated by crime or inſanity, and that this may be obtained as preciſely as poſſible, I propoſe that a general cenſus of the people ſhould be taken, and when the diſtricts are formed, the inhabitants of each ſhall chooſe, from amongſt themſelves, by an abſolute majority, that is to ſay, by not leſs than TWELVE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED AND ONE ſuffrages, a fit and proper perſon to be their REGISTER, or keeper of the archives; whoſe functions ſhall conſiſt in enrolling the names of all the inhabitants of the diſtrict qualified to vote; which qualification, as I have before ſtated, ſhall only be, *having attained eighteen years, being a male unattainted by crime, of ſane intellect, and a native of the country, or if not native, one who ſhall have had paſſed in his favour, by an abſolute majority of the whole repreſentative body, a vote of* DENIZATION.

This REGISTRY ought to be at all times open to the inſpection of the citizens of the diſtrict to which it ſhall belong, and no one ought to have the right of citizenſhip who ſhall have neglected to enter his name, ſituation and place of abode in the Regiſter; and he ſhall, at the time of enrollment, be obliged to bring TWO CITIZENS, whoſe names

names ſhall already be on the regiſter, as vouchers to prove his qualification and right to be ſo enregiſtered, and any citizen who ſhall give a falſe voucher for another in order to obtain his enrollment ſhall, upon ſuch falſity being proved to the ſatisfaction of a jury, be diſenfranchiſed for ſeven years; and if convicted of a ſecond offence, for ever; but this in no caſe to affect his children; and in order that the citizen who may happen to have reſidences in different diſtricts, ſhall not be, from that circumſtance, enabled to obtain an undue influence over his fellow-citizens, by having in conſequence a plurality of votes, I propoſe that the citizen being poſſeſſed of ſuch different abodes, ſhall, at the time of his being enregiſtered, give in the titles and deſignations of ſuch habitations, in each diſtrict where ſuch poſſeſſions may be, ſignifying in each the diſtrict in which he means to exerciſe his right of ſuffrage, and this, under penalty of forfeiture for ſeven years of his elective franchiſe for the firſt offence, and perpetually for the ſecond, upon conviction before a jury of having given in a falſe account to the regiſter: the ſame regulations to be obſerved upon any citizen becoming poſſeſſed of any other reſidence ſubſequent to his enrollment; the account to be given in ten days next after ſuch acquiſition, provided no election ſhall intervene during the ten days, ſhould that happen he ſhall then be bound to do it immediately; and in caſe of removal from one

one diſtrict to another, he ſhall obſerve the ſame mode of procedure, giving notice to the regiſter to ſtrike off his name from the roll of the diſtrict from which he ſhall depart: and I propoſe that every fourth day a liſt of all caſes of death, crimination, and lunacy, ſhall be publiſhed by the municipal officers, and be by them tranſmitted to the regiſter of the diſtrict, that he may accordingly rectify his regiſtry. And that no diſtrict may encreaſe or diminiſh in too a great a degree, and thereby render the repreſentation unequal; I propoſe that every THIRD year the repreſentative body ſhall have laid before them the different regiſters, that they may compare the numbers of each, and join together, or ſeparate, or otherwiſe modify ſuch as ſhall have encreaſed or decreaſed in ſuch manner, that each body of electors ſhall be compoſed as nearly as poſſible of TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND citizens poſſeſſing the elective franchiſe, who ſhall be entitled to ſend FOUR repreſentatives. And, as I propoſe, that in the Commonwealth, no place or office of any kind ſhall be held for a longer time than ONE YEAR, ſo I propoſe, that one month previous to the expiration of each year, the citizens ſhall by a number of twelve thouſand five hundred and one electors, being an abſolute majority of each diſtrict, chooſe a regiſter for the year enſuing:

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the SALARY of the REGISTER to be fixed at THREE BUSHELS OF WHEAT PER DIEM, or a conſideration in money equal to the value of ſuch wheat, to be aſcertained by the reſpective returns of the average price of grain in the diſtrict where he is choſen. His QUALIFICATION to be, being *a reſident in the diſtrict, and having elective franchiſe, having attained the age of twenty-five years, uncontaminated by crime, and of a ſane mind.* The mode of ELECTION to be by BALLOT.

The manner of electing the FOUR REPRESENTATIVES, for each diſtrict of twenty-five thouſand electors, I propoſe to be by ballot, to take place one month previous to the expiration of each year; the only period for which I propoſe they ſhould enjoy their repreſentative capacity; no citizen to be declared to have been choſen unleſs he has an abſolute majority of the citizens having elective franchiſe in his favour; that is to ſay, not having a leſs number of votes than TWELVE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED AND ONE.

The qualification for a repreſentative to be, having attained the age of twenty-five years, having been an inhabitant of the diſtrict which he is to repreſent for the year antecedent to his election, having elective franchiſe, that is to ſay, being

being uncontaminated by crime, and of a ſane mind.

The repreſentative to be incapable of holding any other public ſituation or office during the year of his deputation; and to be paid FOUR BUSHELS of wheat per diem, or an equivalent in money equal to the wheat, taking the average price of the grain in the diſtrict where the repreſentative body meet for the ſtandard; and to be allowed ſuch travelling expences as a jury of TWENTY-FIVE of his conſtituents ſhall deem reaſonable; the jury for this purpoſe to be choſen by lot.

At the ſame time, when the election for the four repreſentatives takes place, I alſo propoſe that there ſhall be choſen four *ſupernumeraries*, who ſhall ſucceed to the repreſentation in caſe of the death of the member, or of his impeachment, or removal, &c. and to perform the duty of the repreſentative in caſe of ſickneſs; the ſupernumerary to receive the ſame ſalary as the repreſentative when on actual ſervice; and to be allowed travelling expences, to be ſettled by jury as already ſtated; and in caſe of his ſucceeding to the repreſentation by the death, or diſmiſſal of the former member, then the citizens of the diſtrict

diſtrict to proceed immediately to chooſe another ſupernumerary.

I alſo propoſe, that the electors ſhall at any time when they ſhall to the number of TWELVE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED AND ONE, agree that the repreſentative or his ſupernumerary has forfeited their confidence be poſſeſſed of the power of removing ſuch deputy or his ſupernumerary, and proceed to the election of another.

COMMITTEE OF GOVERNMENT.

The repreſentative body, when met, ſhall proceed to chooſe from amongſt their own body, a COMMITTEE OF GOVERNMENT, to be elected by ballot, and each member to be conſidered only as having his election by having in his favour an actual majority of the repreſentative body: for example, if the deputies conſiſt of four hundred citizens, then it ſhall be abſolutely neceſſary for each member choſen into the committee of government, to have the ſuffrages of TWO HUNDRED AND ONE repreſentatives. I alſo propoſe, that four of the members of the committee ſhall go out monthly by rotation, and be replaced by four others choſen, in the ſame manner as the firſt. This committee to have no other power than that of executing the decrees of the repreſentation,

ſentation, and laying before them, for conſideration, ſuch meaſures as they may deem neceſſary to the public advantage; but not to put any meaſure into execution until after it ſhall have received the ſanction of an abſolute majority of the repreſentatives of the people. This committee to have under them SIX CLERKS, to be choſen annually from among the people, by an abſolute majority of the repreſentative body, one month previous to the expiration of each year; each to be paid TWO BUSHELS of wheat per diem, or an equivalent in money at the average price of grain in the diſtrict where the repreſentatives ſhall hold their ſittings.

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE.

I alſo propoſe, that the repreſentative body ſhall chooſe from amongſt themſelves, obſerving the ſame forms as in the choice of the members compoſing the Committee of Government, a COMMITTEE OF FINANCE, to conſiſt of twelve members, FOUR of which ſhall go out monthly by rotation, and be replaced in the ſame manner as the citizens of the committee of government. This committee to have under them SIX CLERKS, to be choſen from amongſt the people, in the ſame manner as the clerks of the committee of government; and each to be paid TWO

BUSHELS

BUSHELS of wheat per diem, or an equivalent in money according to the value of the wheat at the average market price of ſuch diſtrict, where the repreſentative body are aſſembled.

The functions of this committee, I propoſe, to be the receipt of the taxes; the care of the national treaſure; and the payment of all ſalaries; the inſpection of public roads, buildings, canals, and rivers, and to report to the repreſentative body, when, and where it is neceſſary to amend old ones, or make new ones; but not to put them into execution, until they ſhall have been decreed by an abſolute majority of the national repreſentation. It ſhall be their duty to inſpect the public works of every ſort, and make the neceſſary payments; but, previous to any ſuch payment taking place, they ſhall report upon it to the repreſentative body, and receive their ſanction. Their accounts to be always ſubject to the inſpection of the citizens compoſing the repreſentation: and every month they ſhall publiſh an account of their receipts, and expenditures, and of the money in their hands, ſigned by the names of the whole committee, with the names of the diſtricts they repreſent: theſe accounts ſhall be depoſited with the regiſters of each diſtrict for the inſpection of the citizens.

COMMITTEE OF AGRICULTURE, TRADE AND PROVISIONS.

I alſo propoſe, that the repreſentative body ſhall chooſe, from among themſelves, a COMMITTEE OF AGRICULTURE, TRADE AND PROVISIONS, obſerving the ſame forms as in the two other committees, FOUR of which ſhall vacate their ſtations monthly, by rotation, and be replaced in the ſame manner as in the other committees. This committee to have under them SIX CLERKS, choſen from among the citizens in the ſame manner as the clerks to the other committees, and each to be paid TWO BUSHELS of wheat per diem, or an equivalent in money, at the average price of the diſtrict where the repreſentation are communed.

The functions of this committee, I propoſe, to be the inſpection of the agriculture of the country; the ſtate of the trade; and the taking meaſures for providing proviſions and fuel for the different diſtricts; they ſhall every month make a report to the national repreſentation, ſigned by all the members compoſing the committee, ſtating the diſtricts which they repreſent; theſe reports, I propoſe, ſhall be ſent to the regiſters of each diſtrict for public information.

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The qualification for a CLERK to the COMMITTEES to be, having attained the age of twenty-one years, and having elective franchiſe, that is to ſay, uncontaminated with crime, of ſane intellect, a native of the country, or naturalized.

I alſo propoſe, to prevent any ſtagnation taking place in the proſecution of the public buſineſs, that at the diſſolution of one repreſentative body, the COMMITTEES, who ſhall be in office, ſhall remain until they are replaced by the regular monthly ſucceſſion of four members of the new repreſentation.

And as laws to be equitable, ſhould always be the expreſſion of the will of the majority of the citizens, I propoſe, that no act, regulation, or decree, ſhall take place and have effect, or be binding on the citizens, unleſs it has received the ſanction of an abſolute majority of the whole repreſentation; that is to ſay, if the deputies are five hundred in number, then to every act that ſhall have force, two hundred and fifty-one members ſhall have given their aſſent, and their names, and hoſe of the diſtricts which they repreſent, ſhall be annexed to every ſuch decree on its promulgation, or elſe it ſhall be conſidered as void, and of none effect. Thus every act of the LEGISLATURE being ſanctioned by an abſolute majority of the DEPUTIES, and theſe repreſentatives being themſelves deputed

by an actual majority of the citizens, it would be a fair inference to suppose all such acts to be the expression of the public will, and to convey, as nearly as human possibility admits, the genuine sense of the community. The same inference will hold good with respect to the committee of executive government, which, being chosen by an absolute majority of the representative body to which every citizen is eligible, whatever they do may be justly considered as springing from the free consent of a majority of the whole citizens. I propose also, that a copy of every act of the LEGISLATURE be sent, properly signed, to the registers of each district, for public inspection, and also to the offices of the JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATORS.

But as the long possession of power has been found, by experience, to corrupt the human mind, and make men take illegal and surreptitious means to continue the enjoyment of it, I propose, to remedy this evil, hitherto found to be fraught with such destructive consequences to the LIBERTY of the human species, that after having served the office of representative for one year, the citizen shall be incapable of being again chosen for two years after: this will have two good effects—the one will be, that the representative being necessitated to return into the mass of the citizens, will be careful not to give his sanction to any arbitrary

trary meaſure, becauſe he will, in that caſe, be ſubjected himſelf, for two years, to all the evils of his own decrees;—the other is, that, by this means, the buſineſs of legiſlating and governing will be more generally diffuſed amongſt the people; and thus the principle of public happineſs will become more univerſally underſtood, and the opportunities of CORRUPTION be conſiderably if not entirely removed.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAWS.

As I conceive, that the adminiſtration of the laws, which ought to be made only with a view to the public good, requires nothing more than integrity and induſtry; and, as nothing can be more unjuſt, or implicate a greater abſurdity, than that thoſe inſtitutions, which are meant for the benefit of all, ſhould be exerciſed for the particular profit and advantage of a few; ſo the eſtabliſhment of attorneys, council, judges, &c. to be paid by the individual who feels it neceſſary to recur to the juſtice of his country, ſeems to be a practice that has originated in corruption, the continuation of which muſt ultimately be deſtructive of all morality, and ſubverſive of that equality of judicial adminiſtration, that alone can render it beneficial and eſtimable in the eyes of men. It is the boaſt, indeed, of ſome countries, that the law is equally open to the rich and the

poor, the ſame may be ſaid of a banker's ſhop; but as it needs no argument to prove, that in the latter inſtance, the man who is unprovided with a good draft will not be allowed to receive money: ſo it is equally demonſtrable, that, in thoſe countries, where the law is adminiſtered at private expence, the man, who is deſtitute of a long purſe, will be equally unable to obtain either law or juſtice. Thus, in ſuch countries, the rich man is enabled to Lord it over his poorer neighbour with impunity. This generates ſtrife amongſt the citizens, and divides their intereſts, which, that they may retain their liberty, and live in perfect ſecurity, they ſhould always endeavour to concentrate and unite.

I propoſe, therefore, that in each diſtrict the citizens ſhall chooſe, annually, from amongſt their own body, by an abſolute majority, a citizen, whoſe duty it ſhall be to preſide over all complaints, both criminal and civil, that may ariſe in the diſtrict, and adjudge them, with the aſſiſtance of a jury, to be choſen by lot from the regiſtry of the diſtrict, according to the laws of the commonwealth. This JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATOR, I propoſe, to be aſſiſted by THREE CLERKS who ſhall alſo be choſen by an abſolute majority of the electors of the diſtrict yearly: The election to take place one month previouſly to the expiration of each year. This tribunal, I propoſe, ſhall

ſhall be open every day for the diſtribution of juſtice. To all parties accuſed, I propoſe giving the right of a peremptory challenge to as many jurymen as the number of which the jury by which they are to be tried, ſhall be compoſed. Thus ſuppoſe FIFTEEN citizens to be a jury, and this is the number I would propoſe; THIRTY ſhall be ſummoned by lot, out of which he ſhall have a right to reject fifteen: the other FIFTEEN to try the cauſe, with the aſſiſtance of the adminiſtrator of juſtice, who ſhall read the law upon the caſe, and in the event of the party accuſed being found guilty, paſs the ſentence affixed by the law immediately, and in all thoſe caſes, where the puniſhment is not preciſely expreſſed by the legiſlature of the Commonwealth, then the jury, to award ſuch puniſhment as they ſhall deem conſiſtent with equity; and if the party ſentenced under this laſt circumſtance be diſatisfied, then an appeal to lie to the committee of executive government, who ſhall report the affair to the repreſentation, an abſolute majority of which ſhall finally decide the cauſe.

I alſo propoſe, that the ſame jury ſhall never try two ſucceſſive cauſes, either criminal or civil; but that for as many cauſes as there are to be tried, ſo many times thirty jurymen ſhall be choſen by lot, and ſummoned to attend; the names to be enrolled, and called over in rotation, and each FIFTEEN, as they are left after the chal-

PAGINATION INCORRECT

lenges, to be the jury to try the cauſe. This will prevent the poſſibility of bribing a jury, becauſe it will be utterly impoſſible to know what jury will try any given cauſe.

The qualification for a judicial adminiſtrator to be, having attained his thirtieth year, having been a reſident in the diſtrict for three years previous to his election, having the elective franchiſe, that is to ſay, uncontaminated with crime, and of ſane mind.—His remuneration to be fixed at THREE BUSHELS of wheat per diem, or an equivalent in money, at the average market price of the diſtrict.

The qualification of a clerk to be, having attained twenty-five years, having reſided in the diſtrict for two years antecedent to his election, and having elective franchiſe: the ſalary to be TWO BUSHELS of wheat per diem, or an equivalent in money.

I alſo propoſe, that the laws ſhould be adminiſtered immediately, and without intermiſſion, allowing only to the parties the time neceſſary to prepare their documents; and in no caſe do I propoſe that the adminiſtration of juſtice ſhall be attended with one farthing expence to either party, except what a jury ſhall adjudge againſt thoſe parties whoſe ſuits they may pronounce litigious and vexatious, for as juſtice ought to be

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diſtributive and impartially adminiſtered, nothing can be more abſurd than to make the obtaining of it a matter of expence to the citizen who applies for it; this being, in fact, nothing more than eſtabliſhing a dangerous pre-eminence in the man of property over his more needy neighbour, and deciding the point in diſpute by the ſtrength of the purſe, and completely and effectually ſecluding POVERTY, from obtaining that redreſs which is equally its right with the greateſt WEALTH and AFFLUENCE.

LIBERTY OF THE PRESS.

This being one of the moſt ſacred rights of a citizen, and perhaps the only means of aſcertaining, what moſt certainly ought to be the principal object of every citizen's purſuit, TRUTH, I propoſe, that, in the Commonwealth, in no poſſible caſe ſhall any reſtriction be laid on the writing, publiſhing, or delivering any diſcourſe or opinion, on any ſubject whatever. Indeed, TRUTH being the end moſt deſirable in all well regulated ſtates, the inveſtigation of principles ought to be free to every one, and rather meet with encouragement than reſtraint; therefore no licence or authority ought to be neceſſary for the printing, publiſhing, or delivery of any doctrine, or of any animadverſion on the public adminiſtration; and theſe are my reaſons; the doctrine, if good, and capable of producing a majority of the

people to declare in its favour, ought, moſt aſſuredly, to be received; if otherwiſe, its own want of importance will be its ſureſt and beſt deſtruction with free-men; and all experience has ſhewn, that the attempt to ſuppreſs opinions is the moſt infallible means of bringing them into eſteem: indeed, that which in itſelf is ſtupid and irrational, does not want the *keen* and *critical* eye of a public accuſer to point out its abſurdity; and if it is reaſonable and juſt, it only marks the ignorance, folly, and wickedneſs, of thoſe who are willing to ſmother it; for in a Commonwealth, where every one has an equal intereſt in ſupporting the happineſs and tranquillity of the nation, no one will be able, by any argument, however plauſible, to injure a ſociety whoſe members will, at all times, be ready to reſiſt every attempt at ſubverting that felicity of which they feel the beneficent effect. Thus, when the government ſhall be RATIONAL, JUST, and EQUITABLE, all the citizens will find their greateſt advantage in defending it from inſidious attacks, and they will be a much better ſecurity for its ſtability than PROSECUTIONS FOR HIGH TREASON, or IMPRISONMENTS FOR SEDITION. The wings of LIBERTY are deprived of their feathers whenever the preſs is laid under reſtraint.

In caſes of LIBEL on private characters, I propoſe, that the perſon who makes the attack, if

if called upon, ſhall either be bound to ſubſtantiate the charge, or be liable to ſuch penalty as a JURY of FIFTEEN MEN, choſen by lot, ſhall inflict, and alſo the citizen convicted, ſhall be deprived, *for ſeven years*, of his elective franchiſe.

INHERITANCE AND BASTARDY.

I propoſe, that, in all caſes, the children ſhall divide, in equal portions, the property of which the father may die poſſeſſed; if the wife be alſo alive, ſhe ſhall be entitled to participate, and receive her dividend accordingly: when ſhe dies, I propoſe, the children ſhall again divide equally.

And as nothing can poſſibly exceed the cruelty and injuſtice of the laws of baſtardy, which are, in fact, *inflicting puniſhment on thoſe who never yet had it in their power to offend*, I propoſe, that in the diviſion of the father's effects, all the children, without exception, ſhall be included, whether born in wedlock or otherwiſe, for if any crime can attach, it muſt be to the father and mother, and not to the child, who is brought into this world without his conſent; and ſurely no one will attempt to deny that the baſtard, as he is called by the crooked policy of ſome governments, is as much the child of the father, and a citizen of the ſtate, as the preſent legitimate inheritors of the parents' wealth. Theſe laws, which ſeem to have originated in an intention to reſtrain men from forming promiſcuous connexions,

nexions, like moſt others, have been found, by experience, to be ſadly deficient in means to the end propoſed. Indeed, what abſurdity can be more apparent than making thoſe the only ſufferers by any particular act, who had no knowledge or ſhare in the commiſſion of it. Would it not be conſidered as iniquitous, to hang the ſon becauſe the father had committed a robbery?—And yet the laws of baſtardy form a parallel caſe in all thoſe countries where they have exiſtence. In my apprehenſion, the only reſult of the laws of baſtardy is the rendering a certain portion of the citizens vicious and the enemies of thoſe ſocieties who deprive them in the moſt cruel and unjuſt manner of the immunities of a citizen, for that in which they participated not, and could not avoid.

In caſes where there are no children to inherit, I propoſe, the poſſeſſor of property to be at liberty to leave it as he pleaſes; and if he dies inteſtate, the property to go to his neareſt relation.

PRICE OF LABOUR.

And that the INDUSTRIOUS MANUFACTURER, LABOURER, or CULTIVATOR, may at all times be enabled to live comfortably, and bring up his family in a manner ſuitable to become good and uſeful citizens, and that they may never be oppreſſed by their richer aſſociates, I propoſe, that no labourer or workman ſhall be paid at a leſs rate for his day's labour than ONE BUSHEL of wheat, or the value

value of it in money, at the average market price of the diſtrict where he is employed—This will always enable him to ſatisfy all the real wants of his nature, and make proviſion for his old age; and ſurely no one can be more juſtly entitled to be rendered comfortable than he who by his labour contributes to the comfort and happineſs of others. I alſo propoſe that every citizen ſhall be at liberty to follow that occupation which moſt pleaſes him, and in any part of the Commonwealth without reſtriction.

REGISTER OF BIRTHS AND BURIALS.

I propoſe, that all citizens ſhall, on pain of loſing their rights of citizenſhip, be obliged to give in regularly an account of all BIRTHS and DEATHS that take place in their families, to the municipal officers, who ſhall tranſmit them, every fourth day, to the regiſter of the diſtrict. I alſo propoſe, that no dead body ſhall be ſuffered to be interred at a leſs diſtance than ONE FURLONG from the city, village, or town, becauſe experience has proved, that ſuffering burial grounds in populous places is deſtructive of health.

PUBLIC TAXES.

When taxes are levied on the people, they ought to be of ſuch deſcription that they may fall as equally as poſſible on all the citizens, according to their reſpective abilities; and not to be of ſuch a nature as to be eaſily avoided, becauſe,

becauſe, this again has a tendency to ſeparate the intereſts of the citizens, which all inſtitutions ought to endeavour to unite; for this purpoſe, the only tax I would propoſe in the Commonwealth, is ſo much per acre on land, to be paid yearly, by the citizens, when they go to ballot for repreſentatives, into the hands of the REGISTER; any citizen who ſhall neglect to pay his quota, or uſe any kind of ſubterfuge to avoid paying for his full number of acres, to forfeit four times the tax. The COMMITTEE OF AGRICULTURE, TRADE AND PROVISIONS ſhall cauſe ſurveys to be made in the different diſtricts; and each citizen, when he enrolls his name with the regiſter, to declare the number of acres he holds abſolutely in his own poſſeſſion; but as the tax thus levied would be extremely ſmall, it would ſcarcely be a temptation for any one to evade it; and in this mode it would be collected without expence. I calculate that FOURPENCE per acre would overpay all the expences of a good government. Theſe taxes to be paid into the hands of the COMMITTEE OF FINANCE, and to be depoſited in the national treaſury, within one month after the receipt, this would preclude thoſe hordes of TAX GATHERERS, EXCISEMEN and CUSTOMHOUSE OFFICERS, that ſwarm in every country, and are almoſt always the *enemies* of the people.

RELIGION.

I propoſe, that this being entirely a matter of opinion,

opinion, in which no one can prove his infallibility, the Commonwealth ſhould not adopt any particular religious tenet, nor pay any prieſt, of any perſuaſion, nor build any houſe of religious worſhip; but that each citizen ſhould be left entirely at his liberty to follow that form of religion which is moſt accordant to his ideas. On no account would I propoſe that it ſhould interfere in any manner with the political government of the COMMONWEALTH, nor ever allow it to become a ſubject of diſcuſſion in the LEGISLATURE.

BREAD AND FUEL.

Theſe being articles of the firſt neceſſity, without which human nature cannot long ſubſiſt, the ſupply of them to the citizens at an eaſy rate ſhould of conſequence form a prominent feature in the adminiſtration of every good government, for nothing can be more ſcandalous, or a greater reproach to any government in any country, than either to ſee a ſcarcity of theſe neceſſary articles, or that they ſhould be at an exorbitant price, I therefore propoſe, that the COMMITTEE OF AGRICULTURE, TRADE AND PROVISIONS, ſhall make it an indiſpenſable part of their duty to ſee that every diſtrict has a proper ſupply of theſe commodities at the moſt reaſonable rates; and in thoſe places that depend for a ſupply from other parts of the Commonwealth by water carriage, I propoſe, that they ſhall eſtabliſh large national magazines, in which ſix months proviſion of

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theſe neceſſaries ſhall always be kept ready for the public uſe: this will prevent the prices being affected by froſt, or other caſualties, and enable the inhabitants to be continually in the enjoyment of a plentiful ſupply at a moderate price. And that this object may be continually kept in view, I propoſe, that the REGISTERS ſhall make a monthly report of their diſtricts, on this ſubject, to the COMMITTEE OF AGRICULTURE, TRADE AND PROVISIONS, who ſhall lay them regularly before the national repreſentation, with their own remarks. The regiſters and the committees to be anſwerable for the truth of their ſtatements. This mode would deſtroy thoſe diſgraceful monopolies that frequently render theſe articles ſo dear as ſcarcely to be within the reach of the poor. In ENGLAND, if this mode was purſued, COALS would never exceed SIX-PENCE or SEVEN-PENCE the buſhel; or BREAD THREE PENCE or FOUR PENCE the quartern loaf, even under the preſent ſyſtem.

MARRIAGE.

It is, I believe, an incontrovertible principle, that the ſtrength of a ſtate depends upon the number of its citizens; to encourage population, therefore, ſhould be the maxim of all wiſe governments; for this purpoſe they tell us, the marriage ceremony in moſt countries was inſtituted, but I apprehend it will not be denied, that to render this means adequate to its end it

ſhould

ſhould neceſſarily be productive of the felicity of the parties contracting: this can never be the caſe while two perſons, who, after living together for a certain time, find their tempers unaccordant, and whoſe manners are but little calculated to promote each other's happineſs, have no power of diſſolving the bond of their union, from thenceforth, contrary to nature, and uſeleſs to the purpoſe for which it was deſigned, that of procreating their ſpecies, and augmenting human happineſs. The hymenial lamp expires when love ceaſes to furniſh oil. To remedy this evil, and render the connubial ſtate really conducive to the happineſs and increaſe of the human ſpecies, I propoſe, that MARRIAGE ſhall be merely a civil contract, and be entered into before the magiſtrate of the place, unattended with expence, a copy of it being tranſmitted to the regiſter of the diſtrict; and that it ſhall at all times be liable to diſſolution, upon ſufficient cauſe being ſhewn to a jury, who ſhall be immediately ſummoned upon the complaint of either the huſband or wife, to the adminiſtrator of the diſtrict—This would prevent thoſe ſhameful bickerings that but too frequently ſend the huſband one way and the wife another, to their mutual deſtruction; becauſe any thing is preferable to the company of thoſe who have ceaſed to merit our affections. I alſo propoſe, that the male, at the age of eighteen, and the female, at the age of ſixteen, ſhall be deemed marriageable—This will have a tendency to leſſen

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thoſe dreadful ſcenes of wretched pollution that every where diſgrace the moral inſtitutions of civilized nations, and which are principally kept in exiſtence by the impolitic reſtraints which has been laid on the youth of both ſexes entering into the hymenial bonds at a period when nature has given vigour to their paſſions, and that greedineſs of wealth that frequently induces parents to oblige their children to render themſelves unhappy for life, by an intermarriage with decripitude, age, or a perſon that is their utter averſion, merely becauſe it is what the world very unjuſtly calls *a prudent match.* Thus the youth, diſguſted at home, ſeeks amongſt thoſe unfortunate females whom a ſimilar policy has driven into a ſtate of proſtitution, to ſatisfy thoſe paſſions that nature has implanted ſtrongly in his breaſt. I therefore propoſe, that no conſent whatever ſhall be neceſſary to the junction of a male and female, except their own; for as this is a matter in which their future happineſs or miſery is concerned, it ſeems but rational and juſt that they alone ſhould be conſulted on an affair of ſuch importance to their welfare—Theſe regulations would alſo remedy another evil, which is the immenſe expence that attends the obtaining of a divorce in moſt countries, and which frequently obliges a man and woman, for want of the money neceſſary, to live together, although they are conſcious of each other's infidelity.

CANALS,

CANALS, PUBLIC ROADS, AND RIVERS.

I alſo propoſe, that no canal ſhall be dug, public road made, or river cleanſed at other than public expence, and this is my reaſon, theſe things being a benefit to the whole community, either immediately or conſequently, ought to be defrayed by the generality of the citizens; they will alſo, by this means, be done much better and more effectually. I propoſe, therefore, that when the inhabitants of any place ſhall deem it neceſſary to widen a river, make a road, or cut a canal, they ſhall lay their obſervations before the COMMITTEE OF FINANCE, who ſhall cauſe inſpection to be made, and report thereon to the repreſentative body immediately, on pain of impeachment for neglect. In every well regulated ſtate, CANALS ſhould interſect the whole country, in order to facilitate the tranſport of the ſuperfluity of one part to another, at eaſy rates, and diminiſh the breed of HORSES, who conſume that produce which ought to nouriſh man, and by this means increaſe the price of proviſions.

WASTE LANDS.

The exiſtence of theſe are a reproach to any government, becauſe they have a tendency to check population, and augment the price of pro-

viſions, both of which are in their conſequences injurious to the Commonwealth, however beneficial they may be to ſome few of its members. I therefore propoſe, that no land whatever ſhall be ſuffered to remain uncultivated, either for parks, pleaſure grounds, common, or otherwiſe, but that the COMMITTEE OF AGRICULTURE, TRADE AND PROVISIONS ſhall make it their duty continually to ſee that all the ſoil of the Commonwealth is in a ſtate of culture, either for paſturage or produce; and in caſe of any citizen's refuſing to cultivate any part of his lands, the committee ſhall take ſuch lands into their own hands, and cauſe them to be cultivated for the benefit of the ſtate, reſerving half the profits towards defraying the public expenditure, and paying the other half into the hands of the owner of the land, who ſhall be permitted to reclaim them, on giving SIX citizens, having elective franchiſe, as ſecurity for their future cultivation. To ſee an acre of land uncultivated, and a citizen without employ in the ſame ſtate, denotes a culpable inattention in the legiſlature, and demands the ſtricteſt enquiry of the citizens into the cauſes of this ſhameful neglect.

MAGISTRACY.

Every TOWN, CITY, and LARGE VILLAGE, I propoſe, ſhould have a MUNICIPAL OFFICER, with clerks

clerks to aſſiſt him, for the regulation of the police; theſe officers and clerks, I propoſe, to be choſen yearly, by ballot, by an actual majority of the whole inhabitants of the municipality, having elective franchiſe; the number of theſe municipalities to be ſettled by the national repreſentation, marking the dependencies of each. The ſalaries of theſe municipal officers to be THREE BUSHELS of wheat per diem; their clerks TWO BUSHELS of wheat per diem; to be paid by the inhabitants of the municipality, and to be aſſeſſed yearly by a jury of TWENTY-FIVE of the citizens of the municipality, to be choſen by lot.

LAME, BLIND, LUNATICS, DEAF AND DUMB.

Theſe deſcription of citizens being in moſt inſtances incapacitated by nature from contributing by their exertions to the common ſtock, moſt juſtly claim the ſupport of their more favoured fellow-citizens, I therefore propoſe, that all ſuch, after declaration of the fact, by a jury of TWENTY-FIVE men of the diſtrict, choſen by lot, ſhall be penſioners of the Commonwealth, and receive ONE BUSHEL of wheat per diem, or its equivalent in money, unleſs the jury are of opinion that their circumſtances do not require it. For ſuch LUNATICS, whoſe being at liberty may be deemed prejudicial to ſociety, by a jury of TWENTY-FIVE, choſen by lot, public edifices ſhould

be erected; theſe to be under inſpection of the COMMITTEE of FORTY; the KEEPER to be choſen yearly by an abſolute majority of the repreſentative body.

PUBLIC PRISONS.

If ſuch diſgraceful buildings, which are always a reproach to the legiſlative body, and can ſcarcely ever obtain in a well regulated ſtate of ſociey, are rendered neceſſary by the degeneracy and corruption of man, at leaſt they ought to be rendered the inſtruments of public utility, and the means of reconducting the citizens into the paths of TRUTH, VIRTUE, and REASON; and not as they are in moſt countries, the nurſeries of vice and infamy, where the novice is hardened in crime, and the profligate loſe all ſenſe of ſhame and of their duty to their country.

I therefore propoſe that in thoſe diſtricts where the national repreſentation ſhall deem it expedient to have priſons, they ſhall always be ſituated at leaſt two miles from any city or town, in an open airy ſituation; that the KEEPER and his ſervants ſhall be choſen yearly, by an abſolute majority of the citizens of the diſtrict, having elective franchiſe, that is to ſay, by the ſuffrage of TWELVE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED AND ONE votes; that they ſhall be paid by the nation, and not

not ſuffered on any account to take any fee or other emolument whatever from the unhappy citizens committed to their care, on pain of attaching criminality; their ſalaries to be THREE BUSHELS of wheat per diem to the keeper, and TWO BUSHELS to each of his ſervants, or an equivalent in money. And that no extortion or other ill treatment of priſoners may obtain, I propoſe, that THREE members of the legiſlative body ſhall be choſen by an abſolute majority of the repreſentation every month, who ſhall viſit all the priſons, and make a report, ſigned with their names, and the diſtricts they repreſent, to the repreſentation; this report ſhall be printed and ſent regularly to the regiſter of the diſtricts, for public inſpection. I alſo propoſe, that all the priſoners ſhall be made to work at ſome uſeful occupation; the profits of their labour to be their own property, after deducting a certain portion towards defraying the expence of the priſon eſtabliſhment, unleſs otherwiſe decreed by their jury, and during their ſeclusion to be fed at the charge of the COMMONWEALTH, in a mode to be ſettled by the REPRESENTATION.

ABOLITION OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENTS.

As nothing can be more unnatural than that man ſhould deſtroy his fellow man, ſo ſociety, in my opinion, can never acquire the right of inflicting

the punishment of death on any of its citizens; indeed, even in cases of murder, the deprivation of the life of the murderer is only redoubling the loss already sustained by the Commonwealth. I should therefore propose the abolition of all capital punishments, and in their place substituting some mode of making those whose offences may be deemed of a capital nature, work hard the remainder of their lives, for the benefit of the community they have injured, for society commits SUICID every time it deprives itself of the services of any of its members, merely becaufe they have already injured it.

EDUCATION.

I have now reached what I conceive to be the most interesting and important of all human objects, since from it springs the only permanent liberty and durable happiness of man, THE CULTURE OF THE HUMAN MIND, and THE EDUCATION OF THE MEMBERS WHO COMPOSE SOCIETY, and this should of course form an institution that ought to be considered of the first consequence to the Commonwealth, and be cordially cherished by all the citizens.

There needs no argument to prove the pains that have been taken by despots, priests, and usurpers, to keep the bulk of the people in a state of

of the moſt ſavage ignorance; almoſt every page of Hiſtory, as well ancient as modern, is a ſtrong and irrefragable evidence of their malign and wicked endeavours. They well knew the importance of education; they were not unacquainted that KNOWLEDGE and LIBERTY went hand in hand, and that wherever the firſt prevailed generally, the latter muſt be the inevitable conſequence; they were perfectly aware that an enlightened people would not conſent to that ſhameful degradation of their ſpecies, of becoming the vile ſlaves and abettors of LAWLESS OPPRESSERS, SANGUINARY TYRANTS, and PECULATING ADVENTURERS; they felt, that man cultivated and educated, would conſider his fellow man only as a man, and not as a god, or being of a ſuperior order. To prevent, therefore, this ſalutary inſtitution from obtaining, which would immediately tend to a total ſubverſion of their uſurped power, formed the moſt prominent and moſt intereſting ſpeculation of every chief. But it was to be done with art and circumſpection, with the apparent conſent of the citizens, and not by prohibitory laws which would at once have blown up this MINE OF INFAMY, and have opened the eyes of thoſe whom it was neceſſary, to further their own views, and that they might be enabled to continue with impunity their nefarious practices, to keep in a ſtate of utter blindneſs; to effectuate this iniquit-

ous ſcheme, and prevent education from ſending forth its irradiating beams amongſt the citizens, required Machiavellian ſkill, and more than common duplicity and adroitneſs, becauſe it was indiſpenſably requiſite for this purpoſe to have the appearance of encouraging that which they meant moſt effectually to ſmother and deſtroy; we therefore ſee the greateſt deſpots encouraging men of letters at their courts, and founding univerſities, but we at the ſame time have the melancholy ſpectacle of their fixing the price of labour at ſo low a rate as completely ſecludes the labourious citizen, who lives by his induſtry alone, from any hope of being able to maintain the expence of educating his children; we ſee them lay heavy impoſts on all the neceſſaries of life, thus rendering it abſolutely requiſite to employ that time which ought to be dedicated to education in hard labour, to ſupport exiſtence; we ſee them under every kind of ſpecious pretext, clogging with ſtamps and other duties the free circulation of knowledge; we ſee newſpapers put under inquiſitorial laws, and in moſt countries we ſee licencers of publications eſtabliſhed, who are careful in rejecting all thoſe works that have any tendency to conduct the people to TRUTH, and REASON, and make them throw off the bandeau of SUPERSTITION, FALSEHOOD and TYRANNY; the theatres are ſhackled in the ſame manner;

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by theſe practices education, and the means of acquiring information, has been confined to a ſmall circle of citizens, who have always been either bought over by the friends of rapacious government, or hunted down by oppreſſion if they have ever preſumed the attempting to illuminate the mind and enlighten the underſtanding of the maſs of mankind; unintelligible and technical terms have been introduced into all the ſciences, and thus by a combination of circumſtances that have had all the ſhew of accident and caſualty, although in fact they are connected links of the great and heavy chain that has been villainouſly forged to bind man down in the moſt degrading ignorance, knowledge and inſtruction, has been ingroſſed by the few to the injury of the many, and has been made a lucrative trade in the hands of thoſe, who, ſeduced by corrupt influence, have, inſtead of imparting it generally, moſt ſcandalouſly abuſed it, from a conviction that they were in no fear of detection by the generality of their fellow citizens, and concurred in the great but diabolical plan of maintaining IGNORANCE, CREDULITY and SUPERSTITION, by means of which men have been made SLAVES. Indeed, education has been ſo very rare and uncommon that thoſe who have poſſeſſed this advantage have generally obtained a great degree of credit with the people, who, though not permitted themſelves to experience

experience its beneficent effects, have always admired it in others. CORRUPTION saw this with pleasure, besieged and subdued the greater part of the learned; OPPRESSION and TYRANNY putting to flight those few honest men who opposed its attacks; thus turning to its advantage this disposition in the people which they feared to gratify; these venal sons of education thus gained over, readily lent their aid to perpetuate abuses in which they were now become interested, to rivet closely the fetters of a tyranny in which they were permitted to participate, and keep man in a state of abject slavery, by rooting him in ignorance and folly, to prevent their own iniquitous measures from being discovered; nay, some of these have even so infamously disgraced themselves, and been such vile tools in the hands of corruption, as to write treatises to prove that man's felicity was considerably diminished and abridged by literary acquirements, and that the more ignorant the man the more completely happy his condition. In consequence, falsehood has every where obtained, systems of error have been established, and men have been left to grope in blindness their way through those dark caverns into which the cunning of priests and tyrants have precipitated them, and which their infernal policy has always prevented from being enlightened by the sacred

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and brilliant rays of EDUCATION, KNOWLEDGE, and TRUTH, which alone can conduct them to the groves of happineſs.

To reſtore then liberty to long inſulted man, to draw immortal and immutable TRUTH out of thoſe holes and corners into which falſehood, ſuperſtition, and tyranny has driven it, and place it on thoſe altars which are at preſent occupied by ERROR, and to remove that diſgraceful ignorance which debaſes human nature, rendering it corrupt, venal, and profligate, I intend that EDUCATION ſhall form a part of the national eſtabliſhment of the Commonwealth, and be conſidered as one of the firſt objects of the legiſlator's care, becauſe to form good and virtuous citizens for a ſtate, it is abſolutely neceſſary that they ſhould be inſtructed in their rights, know how to maintain them, and be acquainted with their nature and conſequence; I therefore propoſe, that in each diſtrict there ſhall be erected a ſufficient number of PUBLIC SCHOOLS, to educate all the children of the diſtrict, and that from the age of four to fourteen, no citizen ſhall be ſuffered to withhold his child from receiving an education at one of the public ſeminaries of the diſtrict in which he reſides, upon pain of forfeiting his rights as a citizen for ever; and that the riſing generation may at all times receive the impulſe of the pub-

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lic will, and that each parent may have a due ſhare in and controul over the education of his child, I propoſe, that every year the MASTERS, MISTRESSES, or TUTORS, ſhall be elected by ballot, by an abſolute majority of the electors of the diſtrict, that is ſay, by the ſuffrage of not leſs than TWELVE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED AND ONE; the new election to take place one month previous to the expiration of each year; and each maſter, miſtreſs, or tutor to receive a ſalary of FOUR BUSHELS of wheat per diem, or an equivalent in money, taking the average market price of the diſtrict, and to live rent free in the national ſchool, which ſhall always be the property of the Commonwealth, and be fitted up with a library, and with mathematical, aſtronomical, optical and other ſcientific apparatus, for the uſe of the pupils; the children to be cloathed, boarded and lodged during the ten years of their education, at the public expence, and without any diſtinction whatever; the expence to be borne by the inhabitants of the diſtrict by aſſeſſment.

And to prevent abuſes taking place in theſe eſtabliſhments, and to enſure a punctual and ſteady conduct in the maſters, miſtreſſes, or tutors, I propoſe, that there ſhall be choſen, in each diſtrict, by a majority of the whole electors, FORTY perſons who ſhall form a committee of

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ſuperintendance, TEN to go out every three months, by rotation, and to be ſupplied by ten other citizens, who ſhall alſo be choſen by an abſolute majority of the whole ſuffrages of the diſtrict; theſe ſhall be bound to examine once in every month, or as much oftener as they ſhall think right, all the ſchools of the diſtrict, and make their report to the repreſentative body, and to the diſtrict, which report ſhall be lodged with the regiſter, for public inſpection; they ſhall alſo audit the accounts of the expenditure attending the public ſeminaries, and ſettle the quota of each citizen towards defraying them, every third month, for the enſuing THREE MONTHS; as the members of this committee will be immediately intereſted in their functions, ſo I propoſe, that no ſalary ſhall attend the execution of them; and to prevent the affairs of the diſtrict ever getting into the hands of a junto, I propoſe that, no citizen, after having ſerved on the committee, ſhall be again eligible to be choſen for twelve months; they ſhall alſo inſpect the conduct of the municipal officers, and report thereon.

The qualification of a maſter or tutor to be, having attained THIRTY YEARS, having reſided in the diſtrict for FOUR years, being a father of a family, and having elective franchiſe.

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The qualification for a miſtreſs to be, having attained TWENTY-SIX YEARS, being a mother, and having reſided in the diſtrict ſeven years.

The qualification for a member of the committee of inſpection to be, having attained TWENTY-ONE YEARS, having been reſident twelve months in the diſtrict, and having elective franchiſe, and being father of a family.

I alſo propoſe, that no RELIGIOUS DOCTRINE whatever ſhall be taught in the national ſchools; and that any maſter, miſtreſs, or tutor may be diſplaced, on twelve thouſand five hundred and one of the electors of the diſtrict ſignifying to the regiſter that he or ſhe has loſt their confidence.

I alſo propoſe, that twice in every year the ſcholars of each diſtrict ſhall aſſemble at ſome place, to be previouſly appointed by the committee of ſuperintendance, to celebrate civic games, and other exerciſes that may be productive of activity and health amongſt the youth; on which days alſo, they ſhall elect from amongſt themſelves, one of the ſcholars who ſhall deliver AN ORATION ON LIBERTY, and the benefits accruing from education, which ſhall be printed and diſtributed through the Commonwealth and

a copy

a copy lodged, with the regiſter of the diſtrict, ſigned by the youth who pronounced it.

MILITARY FORCE AND DISCIPLINE.

The introduction of what have been termed SOLDIERS, that is to ſay, men carefully ſeparated from their brother citizens, and excluſively inſtructed in the art of murdering their fellow-man, has been one of thoſe means of which tyrants have availed themſelves to deſtroy the liberty and independence of man, and ſubjugate him to that diſgraceful ſtate of ſlavery and oppreſſion under which we at preſent ſee him groaning, and languiſhing in almoſt every climate; and the evil that has reſulted to ſociety from this inſtitution is too glaring and notorious to admit of controverſy; yet in a ſtate of aſſociation, ſome kind of defence is abſolutely neceſſary to preſerve the citizens from foreign inſult, and domeſtic depredation; now, as every member of the community is equally intereſted in the preſervation of his rights and liberty, and as teaching one man the uſe of offenſive weapons in preference to another, is giving the one a decided ſuperiority and maſtery over his fellow-citizen; and as CORRUPTION has been enabled, by artful men, to ſpread its baleful influence over theſe military automatons, and thus to enſlave nations to the

the arbitrary caprice of individuals, I propoſe, as a remedy for theſe evils, and to maintain amongſt all the citizens, that equality of right, from which alone muſt flow their reſpective and collective happineſs, and ſecurity againſt oppreſſion —That EVERY CITIZEN in the Commonwealth SHALL BE A SOLDIER AND EVERY SOLDIER A CITIZEN. For this purpoſe, I intend that the ſcience of MILITARY TACTICS ſhall form a part of the education of youth; thus placing all the citizens upon a level in the uſe of arms, after which, if they ſuffer their liberty to be wreſted from them, by ambitious and deſigning knaves, it will be their own fault, and they deſerve only to be ſlaves. The man, who having the means of preſerving his LIBERTY, voluntarily gives it up, is unworthy of being a FREEMAN.

I therefore propoſe, that in every diſtrict there ſhall be erected national military ſchools, into which the youth, after they have obtained the age of fourteen, ſhall be ſent for one year more to learn the exerciſe and duty of a ſoldier, and defender of himſelf and his country. The MASTERS of theſe ſchools to be choſen in the ſame manner as thoſe of the other ſeminaries of the Commonwealth, and to be paid in the ſame manner; the ſame qualifications to be requiſite, and the ſchools to be under the ſuperintendance

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of the COMMITTEE OF FORTY; and the expences attending them to be defrayed by the citizens of the diſtrict, in the ſame manner as thoſe incurred by other public ſchools. I alſo propoſe, that one day in every two months, every citizen from the age of fifteen to fifty, ſhall form himſelf, with his neighbours, into regiments, and go through the martial exerciſe, and military evolutions: this will prevent their forgetting the great principle of defence, and render them at all times ready and fit to defend their country in caſe of attack. I alſo propoſe, that every citizen who ſhall have obtained the age of fourteen, ſhall be furniſhed, by his diſtrict, with a firelock and bayonet, which he ſhall be bound to keep in complete repair, and fit for immediate uſe, if occaſion requires, to defend himſelf and the Commonwealth.

In caſes of public emergency, that is to ſay, of defence, for I would propoſe, that the citizens ſhould never enter upon offenſive war; the force that ſhall be deemed neceſſary by the legiſlature ſhall be called out by an equal portion from each diſtrict, to be choſen by lot, and without diſtinction of perſons. This force to be paid for their ſervices in ſuch manner, and at ſuch rates as the legiſlative body ſhall judge fitting and expedient, and to remain on foot only ſo long as

the public danger ſhall be declared to exiſt by the national repreſentation.

Thus all being adequate to the defence of themſelves, and of their country, it would be impoſſible to ſubjugate, as at preſent, one part of a nation by another, and, at the ſame time, the ſociety would be preſerved from foreign attack, ſince it would be, in fact, attacking an hornet's neſt to attack a nation of armed men, well diſciplined, and whoſe common and natural intereſt would conſiſt in ſupporting and protecting each other. Thus thoſe bloody and cruel wars that have ſo often depopulated the earth, would receive an effectual check; ambition would not know where to rear its head with any probable chance of ſucceſs; cruel and blood-thirſty chiefs would be abandoned by an enlightened people, and we ſhould no more have the misfortune to ſee either an ALEXANDER or a CÆSAR; a MAHOMET or a CORTEZ; a CHARLES THE TWELFTH or a LEWIS the FOURTEENTH; a WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR or a CZAR PETER.—Peace would be reſtored to the blood drenched earth; ſecurity would reign in the cottage and the city, and men would no longer be liable to have infamous and oppreſſive meaſures inſolently crammed down their throats with the point of a bayonet, or to be cruelly and wicked crimped or kidnapped; tyranny

tyranny would receive its vital blow, and deſpotiſm become as obſolete and uncommon as it is now prevalent and faſhionable. The neceſſity of reforming abuſes would no where exiſt, becauſe citizens inſtructed in their rights, and rendered capable of defending them, would never ſuffer a ſet of wretched and cowardly miſcreants to uſurp an authority over them not warranted by their nature, nor conducive to the felicity and repoſe of the people; ſpies and informers would get into diſuſe and diſeſteem; goals would become almoſt unneceſſary, and the ſcience of government really become the art of rendering the Commonwealth happy and flouriſhing.

PROVISION FOR THE POOR.

Nothing ſeems more rational than that ſociety ſhould be obliged to provide for all its members, I therefore propoſe, that in every diſtrict there ſhall be erected NATIONAL MANUFACTORIES of ſuch articles, that every citizen wanting employment may be able to aſſiſt. In theſe manufactories, I propoſe, none ſhould be admitted unleſs they produce a voucher from TWELVE of their neighbouring fellow citizens, to the propriety of their conduct, their induſtry, and their incapability of procuring employ. To each of thoſe citizens who ſhall have paſt the AGE OF FIFTY without having been enabled to provide for their old age,

I propoſe, that upon production of a certificate, ſigned by TWELVE of their neighbours, who are citizens, having elective franchiſe, of their former good conduct, induſtry, and of their preſent incapacity, the regiſter of the diſtrict ſhall regularly pay FOUR buſhels of wheat per week, or the value thereof at the average market price of the diſtrict.

CONSTITUTION.

The firſt buſineſs of the legiſlative body ſhould be to frame a CONSTITUTION upon the ſacred RIGHTS OF MAN, and all LAWS and DECREES ſhould be conſidered as null and of none effect that deviated from the principles of this conſtitution; and the propoſer, and thoſe concerned, to be at all times anſwerable to the people for their conduct, a majority of whom ſhall decide their fate; and in order that the conſtitution may be ſuch as is convenient and ſuitable to the people, I propoſe, that every SEVEN YEARS it ſhall either receive the ſanction of a majority of the people, or undergo ſuch alteration as they ſhall deem neceſſary; for this purpoſe a TREBLE number of repreſentatives ſhall be choſen, independent of the ordinary repreſentative body, whoſe function ſhall be to examine and reviſe the conſtitution, and which function ſhall ceaſe when that buſineſs is completed; their ſittings

not

not to exceed TWO MONTHS in any caſe. I propoſe, that they ſhall be *paid* in the ſame manner as the other repreſentatives, and their *qualification* and *mode of election* to be the ſame.

CALCULATION OF THE EXPENCE OF A GOVERNMENT UPON THE FOREGOING PLAN, FOR A POPULATION OF TEN MILLIONS OF MOUTHS, SPREAD OVER A TERRITORY COMPRISING FIFTY MILLIONS OF ACRES.

Of the above number I ſuppoſe there would be three millions of male citizens having elective franchiſe, that is, who had obtained their eighteenth year; this divided into diſtricts of TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND each, would make ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY.

I reckon, for the ſake of clearneſs, the buſhel of wheat at ſix ſhillings ſterling money.

120 REGISTERS, at 3 *buſhels of wheat* per diem each — — — — —	£39,420
3 CLERKS to each REGISTER, at 2 *buſhels of wheat* per diem each — — —	78,840
STATIONARY, &c. for each REGISTER'S OFFICE, ſuppoſe *one hundred pounds* each per annum — — — — —	12,000
480 DEPUTIES, at 4 *buſhels of wheat* per diem each — — — — —	210,240
Carried forward	340,500

TRA-

Brought over	£340,500
TRAVELLING EXPENCES for each DEPUTY, average at *twenty pounds* each	9,600
6 CLERKS to the COMMITTEE OF GOVERNMENT, at 2 *bushels of wheat* per diem each — — — — — —	1,314
STATIONARY, &c, for the OFFICE, per annum — — — — — —	250
6 CLERKS to the COMMITTEE OF FINANCE, at 2 *bushels of wheat* per diem each — — — — — — —	1,314
STATIONARY, &c. for the OFFICE, per annum — — — — — —	250
6 CLERKS to the COMMITTEE OF AGRICULTURE, TRADE AND PROVISIONS, at 2 *bushels of wheat* per diem each —	1,314
STATIONARY, &c. for the OFFICE, per annum — — — — — —	250
PRINTING and other contingent expences of the REPRESENTATIVE BODY, COMMITTEES, REGISTERS, &c.	25,000
120 JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATORS, at 3 *bushels of wheat* per diem each — —	39,420
3 CLERKS to each JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATOR, at 2 *bushels of wheat* per diem each — — — — — — —	78,840
STATIONARY, &c. for each OFFICE, at 250l. per annum — — — —	30,000
	£528,052

Thus

This may be amply provided for by a tax amounting TO ONE TWENTIETH PART OF A BUSHEL OF WHEAT, or about FOUR-PENCE PER ACRE PER ANNUM on the lands of the Commonwealth, which will produce a sum of EIGHT HUNDRED AND THIRTY-THREE THOUSAND THREE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-THREE POUNDS, and may be collected without any expence, by the REGISTERS of the districts, and will greatly overbalance all the necessary expences of an HONEST and RATIONAL GOVERNMENT, leaving every year the considerable sum of THREE HUNDRED AND FIVE THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-ONE POUNDS, to be applied to works of PUBLIC UTILITY, and other casualties, as they may occur.

Taxes, raised by FOUR-PENCE per acre on land — — — — — —	£833,333
Expences of Government — — —	528,052
Balance remaining yearly in the Public Treasury — — — — —	305,281

Thus every FOURTH year the taxes might be remitted to all the citizens; on such years I would propose that they should celebrate a festival TO OECONOMY.

I have

I have purpoſely avoided mentioning any thing concerning the FEMALE CITIZENS, as ſhould this haſty production be favourably received, I have an intention of publiſhing my ideas concerning women, in a treatiſe by itſelf.

FINIS.